

Padre Pio

Heavenly Facts and Words of Wisdom

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Introduction

Padre Pio once said: *“When a soul comes close to me, I take hold of it, and once I have taken hold of it, I will never let it go.”* [1]

My experience of coming close to Padre Pio occurred when I was ten years old, when I was barely out of childhood. From that moment on, even as I now approach my 80th year, I remain firmly in his grasp.

During these years, Padre Pio has guided me and explained events in my future to me. He did this while he was still alive, both in person when I visited him in San Giovanni Rotondo, and in dreams. Since his passing, he has continued to come to me in dreams. He has protected me, through the years, numerous times when I was in difficulty.

Now that I have retired, it is as if a third life has begun for me. My first life was as a seminarian and then as a priest. The second, after I left the priesthood, was as a husband, a father, a doctor, and a child and adult psychiatrist. I am presently living my third life as a grandfather and a retiree. I freely affirm that Padre Pio’s intimate presence has permeated all three of my lives and continues to do so.

I now have more time to concentrate my attention on Padre Pio. But it has become more difficult to revisit specific events. Once one reaches a certain age, the details of past experiences can become hazy and are no longer vivid and clear. However, there are certain memories that remain indelible and as clear as the day they occurred. I am also aided in my recollection by some notes that I took at the time.

I have given testimony to the following episode in a video interview with Stefano Campanella, director of Tele Radio Padre Pio TV in San Giovanni Rotondo. The account, paraphrased below, was recorded and broadcast in July 2013, about fifty years after the event. [2]

This happened in 1964. To be exact it was Sunday July 5, 1964. I had celebrated the Sunday evening mass in the cathedral of Castellammare di Stabia where I was vice pastor.

At that time, it was necessary to fast from midnight if one wished to receive communion or celebrate mass. So, with no food or drink from midnight until 7:30 pm, I celebrated mass. It was then about 9:00 pm when I was back home for the evening meal.

I remember that I ate something. Then, feeling a bit weak and tired, I decided to go to bed. I had just put on my pajamas when, suddenly, I heard the voice of Padre Pio telling me with impressive force: “Hurry, hurry, don Peppino, those devils are beating me. They are hurting me so much. Come help me.”

I couldn’t deny what I had heard. I wondered what was happening. I was tired but it was Padre Pio’s voice.

I told my mother and my father, as they were living with me at the time. I said: “What can I do? I’m tired, I have no energy.” My mom offered to travel with me to

keep me awake. We called other spiritual children of Padre Pio in town and two of them offered to join us on the trip. So, all four of us got in the car and left.

We arrived in San Giovanni Rotondo. The church was closed. It was around midnight, perhaps one in the morning. We had prayed along the way without knowing what we were praying for.

That morning, Padre Pio didn't go down to the church to say mass. He didn't go down because he was sick. A friar let me go to see Padre Pio, who had bruises on his forehead. One could see that he had been badly beaten.

Padre Pio smiled and remained silent. I remember that I kissed his hand. He was resting. I left and returned to the people who had come with me to explain what I had seen.

Later, I learned more about what had happened to Padre Pio from others. I didn't see the girl possessed by the demon, and what happened later in the church, around 10 or 11 that morning. I don't remember. Maybe I was in the little church. I never talked to Padre Pio about this event. It is just that I felt particularly close to Padre Pio after this episode. I have kept this perplexity with me for many years. It popped up now, after about fifty years, at a time when I am revisiting events in my life.

This is how father Joseph Pius recalled that same episode in a conversation with Father John Schug:

"In July of 1964 there was a possessed woman being exorcized at San Giovanni Rotondo. Padre Pio came through the church that morning to give his general blessing to the women, as he usually did after hearing confessions. This woman started to speak, but in an unnatural bass voice, saying: 'Padre Pio, I'll see you tonight.'

People wrote it off, as she was a little cracked in the head, talking to Padre Pio in that manner. That night... think of the noise – the level of noise – which there must have been!

The superior was awakened by a tremendous noise from Padre Pio's room. He rushed in. Padre Pio was on the floor in his night clothes, but with a pillow under his head, bleeding from his forehead. His face was cut above his right eyebrow. His eyes were black, and under the eyes was all black. He looked like he took charcoal and underlined his eyes. His shoulders were terribly bruised. He was like that for a week.

The superior said: 'Padre, how did you get there? Who put the pillow under your head?' He answered: 'The Madonna.'

That morning the Capuchins gave out the story that Padre Pio had got up during the night and had fallen. He wasn't able to come down for mass for a week. The friars were criticized by some fanatic women for not having assisted Padre Pio." [3]

Another episode comes to my mind.

One Sunday evening, summer of 1965, I had reached San Giovanni Rotondo by car. I entered the new church of Santa Maria delle Grazie. It was packed.

The central aisle in between the pews, as well as the side aisles between the pews and the external walls of the church, were full of people standing. With some difficulty I made my way through the crowd and approached the pews on the left side of the church. I was able to find room to stand behind the last pew on the left.

Some of the people sitting in that last pew looked back and saw me. Probably because they could see from how I was dressed that I was a priest, out of respect, they squeezed closer to each other and made room for me at the far end of the pew, closest to the wall. I accepted the invitation nodding and smiling. I then knelt down on the far-left side of the last pew, with people standing behind me and to my left.

Padre Pio was far away, in the front row of the left side of the church, in his own kneeler as usual.

The rosary and other evening prayers were going on. From where I was, I couldn't see Padre Pio because of all the people seated or kneeling between us.

I started praying the rosary on my own. I was particularly concentrating on one issue. There was a woman in Naples, diagnosed with ovarian cancer. I had told her that I was going to San Giovanni Rotondo and she had asked me to tell Padre Pio about her illness and ask him if he could say a prayer for her. The day after, Monday, she had an appointment at the hospital and the doctors were to do the final tests and decide and plan the details of her surgery.

So, I prayed the rosary for her and resolved to tell Padre Pio about her when I could. It was at the end of the rosary when I heard some commotion going on in the aisle to my left. I raised my head and saw that the people standing in the aisle were stepping aside to let someone pass making their way towards the back of the church.

I saw that the person making his way to the back of the church was a friar. He was tall, blonde, and imposing, but he was clean shaven. I had never seen a friar without a beard. I turned around to see if there might be a problem in the back of the church or at the exit that he was going to address, but nothing was going on behind me. When the friar reached the pew where I was, instead of continuing, he stopped, looked at me smiling.

He bent towards me and said: "Padre Pio sent me to ask you to stop praying for that person. You have obtained what you were asking for, and now you are distracting him with your insistence." I said: "Ok". He smiled again, stood, and started walking back towards where Padre Pio was, but after 3 or 4 steps, I didn't see him any longer.

Whatever was happening it all seemed normal and logical to me at the moment. Nothing extraordinary though, I suspect, I had just talked to Padre Pio's angel. It was Sunday evening.

Back home, on Tuesday, around noon, the son of the woman from Naples came to my house. He hugged me crying. He had a message for me: "Don Peppino, my mom sent me. She is still in the hospital. The doctors have decided to keep her as an inpatient for a few more days for observation and more tests, because they don't understand what is going on. When the doctors saw my mom yesterday Monday morning, they couldn't find the tumors that needed to be removed. They did x-rays and other tests but there was no trace of tumors. My mom feels great and healed, and she asks you to thank Padre Pio for his prayers."

One final memory comes to mind. On yet another occasion, there were special things that I needed to discuss with Padre Pio. I had hoped to speak with him after mass, but a large group of Dominican friars had already assembled in the hall of St. Francis and it would be nearly impossible to talk to him.

I gave up, and at around 9 am I went up the stairs into the choir at the back of the new church. Padre Pio was praying in the matroneum of the new St. Mary's church, on the same floor to the right. From where we were, we couldn't see each other. I began to recite the Rosary. All 15 mysteries . . . the *salve regina* . . . the litanies.

Soon after completing the recitation, I heard some murmurings in the main floor of the church. I got up to see what was going on and noticed that everybody was looking up at where Padre Pio had been praying. I could not see him from where I was standing so I moved further to the right. I saw Padre Pio standing near where he had been praying. There were friars holding his arm. He was standing looking in my direction, and gesturing that I go to him. With my heart racing, I quickly walked over to where he was standing.

He told the friars: "Leave me alone with don Peppino for a while." The friars looked at each other very surprised, then looked at me, and left. Padre Pio leaned on my arm and said: "Now stop complaining. Tell me everything that you want to say." We walked together arm-in-arm for about 20 minutes. I told him what was on my mind and he gave me advice. During our conversation, at one point, he turned and spoke to the large mosaic image of Our Lady that was on the back wall of the main altar. I couldn't hear a word. After a time, he looked back at me and said: "I have told her."

When I recall these things today, I continue to be moved at a very deep level.

Putting together *Heavenly Facts and Words of Wisdom* has given me a means of staying close to Padre Pio through the years. As has my website which is dedicated to him.

When I am moved to write or to speak about Padre Pio, it is impossible to resist the impulse, or to put it off. Far better to yield than to attempt to resist.

May your reading of the pages that follow be enjoyable and fruitful.

Giuseppe Caccioppoli
June 2019

Notes

1. Luigi Peroni, *Padre Pio da Pietrelcina*, edizione Borla, Roma, 2002 (p. 394)
2. An account of this episode occurs from 6m 35s - 10m 05s in the video interview with Stefano Campanella at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tjQGBoy1eU&feature=c4-overview&list=UU6tZWEYfNqoF8XjF7xA-DHg>
3. John Schug, *A Padre Pio Profile*, 1987, pp. 72-3

1 Prophecy: How did Padre Pio know?

Supernatural insight and special input from Above

From above

“If the answer doesn’t come from above what can I say?”

Padre Carmelo, superior of the convent, asked Padre Pio for advice about a situation he was going through. Padre Pio answered that he would pray. Days later he asked again and got the same answer. Padre Carmelo was surprised that he had to wait so long for an answer. Padre Pio: “My son, if the answer doesn’t come from above what can I say?”¹

“If nobody up there says something, what answer can I give?”

Padre Eusebio Notte asked Padre Pio why he couldn’t say to him something about a future event he had asked for. Padre Pio: “If nobody up there says something, what answer can I give?”²

“I know that I know but still you have to tell me your sins”

In confession a person was so nervous that he was unable to say a word. Finally, he said: “Padre, you know all.” Padre Pio: “I know that I know but you have to tell me your sins.”³

New babies

“The baby was born yesterday.”

Padre John Saint John, chaplain in the Fifteenth Army Force, wrote that one day Padre Pio asked him if he knew a certain sergeant. He said he didn’t know him. Padre Pio: “Well, he is in the Second Bomb Group. Tell *him* that the baby was born yesterday and the wife and baby are doing fine.”

Padre John drove to the squadron indicated and found the sergeant. He asked him if he knew Padre Pio. The sergeant said that he had never heard of him. Padre John: “Padre Pio told me to tell you that your baby was born yesterday.” The sergeant turned pale. Two days later, the Red Cross notified him that his baby has been born.⁴

“He is the doctor who delivered my baby.”

Vincenzo Martini was called from the hospital to go there immediately. His wife was about to give birth to their second child. A decision needed to be made: either to save the life of the child or that of the mother. Vincenzo opted in favor of the wife.

While in the act of signing the papers, a doctor came out saying: “Congratulations, you are the father of an eight-pound boy!”

Vincenzo ran to his wife. She said that a doctor in a brown habit had delivered her baby. No such doctor was found in the hospital.

Finally, Vincenzo remembered Padre Pio and showed his picture to his wife. The wife said: “He is the doctor who delivered my baby.”⁵

¹ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 78

² Ibid., p. 78

³ Ibid., p. 48

⁴ Ruffin, 1991, p. 263

⁵ Gaudiose, 1974, pp. 196-197

“Call him Pio”

Kneeling while Padre Pio was passing in the hallway, a man asked him: "Father, my wife is expecting. What name should we give to the boy?" "Call him Pio". The man replied: "And if it is a girl?" "Call him Pio", insisted Padre Pio. It was a boy.^{6 7 8}

Two years later the same man made a similar request, and Padre Pio said: "Call him Francesco." It was also a boy.⁹

“Neither the mother nor the child will die.”

Filippo De Capua's wife pregnancy was not going well, and the specialists in Napoli and Foggia had said that either the mother or the child would die at delivery. Filippo asked Padre Pio for prayers. Padre Pio said: "Neither the mother nor the child will die." The days passed and Filippo started doubting. He asked Padre Costantino to remind Padre Pio about his wife. Padre Pio: "Tell him that if something happens, it will be as a result of his lack of faith. It is not yet written in the decrees of God. But if something happens, it will be for his lack of faith." Things went well just as Padre Pio had said.¹⁰

Food

All that bread

Padre Raffaele testified that during WWII in 1941 that there was no bread to eat for lunch for the ten religious and the fifteen poor at the table. "We started eating the soup. Padre Pio was still praying in the choir. Padre Pio suddenly entered the refectory holding fresh bread, enough for everybody. When we asked him where he got all that bread, he answered: "A woman from Bologna came to the front door and gave it to me." Padre Raffaele concluded: "Nobody said a word. Everybody understood."¹¹

“Dig five meters from here, and you will find all the water you need.”

During the building of the convent and church of the Holy Family in Pietrelcina, the builders had shortage of water. They decided to ask Padre Pio for help. At that time Padre Pio was in San Giovanni Rotondo. He was shown the blueprint of the construction site. He placed his finger on a spot and said: "Dig five meters from here, and you will find all the water you need." They did, and the abundant water was used for building, but also for the needs of the town.¹²

“This is my first miracle for the day!”

Fra Modestino, showed Padre Pio a bottle of local wine that he had just bought in town, and asked him to bless it. Padre Pio performed the blessing, and then with a broad smile said: "Well, this is my first miracle for the day!"

Fra Modestino did not understand why Padre Pio had said that. He shared the wine with others. It was excellent.

Not long after, Fra Modestino learned that the wine maker had been jailed for making fake wine from powders, not grapes.¹³

⁶ Winowska, 1988, p. 128

⁷ Cataneo, 1991, p. 55

⁸ Del Fante, 1950, pp. 44-45

⁹ Parente, 1968, p. 89

¹⁰ Capobianco, 2006, pp. 184-185

¹¹ Flumeri, 1996, Vol. I, p. 882

¹² Parente, 1968, pp. 88-89

¹³ Modestino, 2001, p. 24

“That apple comes from Rodi”

Maria Rosa Valente from Rodi Garganico gave a very nice apple to Padre Vincenzo da Montemarano, asking him to give it to Padre Pio. Padre Vincenzo went to Padre Pio, but before he could say a word, Padre Pio said: “That apple comes from Rodi.”¹⁴

“How did the ones that you ate on the train taste?”

Silvio Scocca was on a train with a bag of candies that he intended to give to Padre Pio. Feeling hungry, he opened the bag and ate some of the candies.

On receiving the bag, Padre Pio asked: “How did the ones that you ate on the train taste?”

“Go and prepare the food for my sick.”

In February 1958 Laurino Costa sent a telegram to Padre Pio: “Pray for me to find a job.”

He received a telegram back: “Come to San Giovanni Rotondo at once.”

On the 4th he met with Padre Pio for the first time: “Laurino, I see you have arrived. You will feed my sick.” “But Padre”, Laurino protested, “I’ve never cooked an egg in my life.”

Padre Pio insisted: “Go and prepare the food for my sick. I’ll always be near you.” Laurino went to Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza and was told at the door: “You must be the experienced cook we’ve been waiting for.”

Laurino reported years later: “It was a frightening sight. This great spacious kitchen with huge kettles, stoves, sinks, pipes, basins, kitchenware and so forth. I never saw anything like that in my life. But the most alarming feature was the sight of the kitchen employees standing there, waiting for my orders. However, I had the sensation that I had always been there. The same day I was preparing meals for 450 people. To this day I still don’t know what happened. All day long I found myself calmly working and telling others what to do, as though I was carrying out a routine I had been used to. After a while Padre Pio insisted that my family move here. So my family came and we settled here. We have been here for fourteen years.”¹⁵

Priesthood

“He will reach the priesthood.”

Paolo Covino’s mom asked Padre Pio if her child would become a priest. Padre Pio said: “Yes, he will reach the priesthood.” *Twelve years later Padre Paolo Covino was ordained as priest in the Capuchin order.*¹⁶

“I have found out what I needed to know.”

A Dominican friar found out that the nuns in the convent in Pompeii were divided for and against Padre Pio. Some believed he was a saint. Others thought he was a fraud. To settle the doubt, he decided to visit Padre Pio in civilian clothes.

He was in line for confession, but Padre Pio started staring at him, and finally signaled to come over. He told him: “Go and put on your habit, then come back and I will hear your confession.”

The Dominican: “Padre, I came in order to find out something and I have found out what I needed to know.”^{17 18}

¹⁴ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 245

¹⁵ Schug, 1987, pp. 37-41

¹⁶ Covino, 2007, pp. 29-30

¹⁷ Gaudiose, 1974, pp. 148-149

¹⁸ Carty, 1963, p. 29

“You will go to Arabia”

In 1948 the Capuchin missionary Louis Magliacanni was about to return to India after visiting his family in Italy. In a few days the boat was to leave Naples for India. A friend suggested that he visit Padre Pio. Louis said that Padre Pio was a fake. The friend suggested going anyway so that he could have a firsthand view of a “fake”.

Padre Pio: “Padre Louis you will never go back to India. You will go to Arabia”. Padre Louis: “Before coming here I thought you were crazy. Now I know you are.” Padre Louis stayed for lunch at the friary.

During lunch Louis was called on the phone. It was a cardinal from the Congregation for the Propagation of Faith. He told him not to go to India, and instead to go immediately to Rome. In Rome the Cardinal and Padre Louis had a private audience with Pope Pius XII.

The Pope told Louis: “You have been chosen to open a new mission in Arabia.” Louis responded: “I knew that! Padre Pio told me. I thought he was crazy. Now I realize he is a saint!”¹⁹

“He will become a priest”

On September 19th 1968, Padre Paolo Covino asked Padre Pio if his nephew would become a priest. Padre Pio: “Yes, and he will be a good religious.” His nephew was ordained a priest on July 25th 1976.”²⁰

“You will be a friar like your uncle.”

In the summer of 1919, Alberto D’Apolito went to see Padre Pio with his uncle Padre Clemente. Padre Pio asked him if he wanted to become a friar. Alberto answered that he wanted to become a Salesian priest. Padre Pio: “You will be a friar like your uncle.” Alberto entered the seminary that October, and became a Capuchin friar.²¹

“Only two”

Padre Alberto: “There were six of us in the Capuchin seminary. Padre Gaetano da Ischia Castro asked how many would be ordained priests. Padre Pio replied: “Only two.” In fact, only Padre Cristoforo and I were ordained. The others left.”^{22 23}

“Only five”

In 1930 Padre Fortunato asked Padre Pio how many of the twenty-five students in the seraphic college would become friars. Padre Pio said: “Only five”. Padre Paolo Covino confirmed in 1992 that only five of the students had become friars.²⁴

“Do you understand you have a vocation?”

Giulia Schettini from Cassano Murge, Province of Bari, had a strong attraction to religious life but was tied by her family situation. Both her parents had died, and she was taking care of her brothers.

When she went to Padre Pio for confession, before she could say a word he said: “Do you understand you have a vocation?” When she explained the family situation he replied: “And what are you going to be, a servant for your brothers all your life?”

Giulia testified: “I am a nun thanks to him.”²⁵

¹⁹ Multiple, 2009, Preface, p. x

²⁰ Covino, 2007, pp. 195-196

²¹ Alberto, 2007, p. 68

²² Schug, 1987, p. 48

²³ Alberto, 2007, pp. 74-75

²⁴ Covino, 2007, pp. 75-76

²⁵ lasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 256-257

“Someday you will be Padre Leone.”

In 1944 Corporal Leo Fanning (in Italian this would be Leone Fanning) was assigned to the 304th Bomb Wing with Mario Avignone and Joe Peluso. When he was introduced, Padre Pio said: “Your name is not just Leone. Some day you will be Padre Leone. You are to go to the altar of God. I do not want you to go anywhere else.”

Back home Leo entered the seminary and was ordained in Paterson, New Jersey, on May 30th 1954. Ten minutes before the ordination Leo received a Western Union telegram: “Congratulations on the day of your ordination. Padre Pio”.

Leo couldn't believe it. He had not told him.²⁶

“The Lord calls you to monastic life.”

Mansueta Loconte and Palmina Guarini were friends and both were considering becoming nuns.

Mansueta went to see Padre Pio with her father in 1947. Her father had a letter from Palmina to give to Padre Pio. Padre Pio took the letter, among many others, and then went to hear the confessions of the women.

When Mansueta knelt at the confessional, Padre Pio immediately told her: “Be assured that the Lord calls you to monastic life.” After the confession he added: “Tell Palmina that I will answer her letter with a prayer.”

Mansueta wrote on May 9th 1996: “We entered the monastery of the Poor Clares in Assisi on the same day, September 24th 1947, and we have been in the same monastery for fifty years.”²⁷

“My fullest blessing.”

Palmina Guarini, now sister Chiara Rosaria, gave her own testimony on May 9th 1996. She went to confess to Padre Pio on September 1st 1947, and said: “I’m asking your blessing before I enter the monastery.” Padre Pio, without asking for an explanation, said: “My fullest blessing, my fullest blessing!”²⁸

“You will not die wearing this habit.”

Padre Eugenio Bartieri and another friar were at the convent of Padre Pio. The other friar went to talk to Padre Pio and when he came back to Padre Eugenio, he appeared shocked and didn't want to say why.

Over the years they went their separate ways and the other friar left the Capuchin order.

Padre Eugenio met him years later. The former friar opened up: “Padre Pio told me: ‘You will not die wearing this habit.’”²⁹

“This spiritual life at times seems like climbing glass.”

Padre Pasquale Cataneo was on the bus from Foggia to San Giovanni Rotondo. He was thinking: “This spiritual life at times seems like climbing glass.” When Padre Pio saw him soon after, he said: “So then, this spiritual life seems like trying to climb glass?”^{30 31}

²⁶ Ruffin, 1991, p. 264

²⁷ Iasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 247-248

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 258-261

²⁹ Ibid., p. 286

³⁰ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 64-65

³¹ Iasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 236-237

“Come back in your Dominican habit”

A Dominican friar came in casual dress, with pants and pullover, not wanting to be recognized. Padre Pio passing by told him: "Go home, and come back in your Dominican habit."^{32 33}

Impending death

“In a week you will leave this world.”

Don Pierino Galeone reported: “One day there was a large group of men in the sacristy. Padre Pio was praying for thanksgiving after Mass. When he got up to leave he called a man aside, to talk to him. We were all envious of that privilege. After a while the man rejoined us. He was pale and sad. Padre Pio had told him: “My friend, in a week you will leave this world. Don’t worry. Pray with humility. I will be constantly near you. And I myself will accompany you to heaven.” The man died a week after.”³⁴

“It has been determined that you will die very old.”

Padre Romolo to Padre Pio: “We are almost the same age; who will die first?” Padre Pio: “We will both live a long time, but I will die first. It has been determined that you will die very old.” Padre Romolo survived Padre Pio, and died in 1981 at the age of ninety-four.^{35 36}

“Your life is hanging by a thread of parsley.”

Padre Teofilo di Pozzo visited Padre Pio in the midst of a grueling preaching schedule. Padre Pio told him to slow down in his activities. “Don’t you know that your life is hanging by a thread of parsley?”

He died four months later at the age of fifty-two.^{37 38}

“You will stay in Pietrelcina until death.”

On August 19, 1947 Padre Luca da Vico del Gargano told Padre Pio that he wouldn’t like to be transferred from Pietrelcina. Padre Pio: “Stay calm, my son, you will stay in Pietrelcina until your death.” Padre Luca fell ill few weeks later, and died in Pietrelcina on November 2 1947. On January 1948 Padre Pio sent a message to the friars in Pietrelcina through his brother Michele: “I saw Padre Luca going to Paradise on Christmas night with much splendor and glory. He prays for the friars and for Pietrelcina from heaven.”^{39 40}

“Wait to see what will happen later on, after my death!” Padre Ambrogio told Padre Pio: “We have very little breathing space. We hear confession endlessly, and we have to take care of so many requests, and of so many people asking for something.” Padre Pio: “Wait to see what will happen later on, after my death!”⁴¹

³² Winowska, 1988, p. 151

³³ Carty, 1963, p. 29

³⁴ Galeone, 2009, pp. 80-81

³⁵ Covino, 2007, pp. 69-70

³⁶ Alberto, 2007, pp. 70-73

³⁷ Cataneo, 1991, p. 74

³⁸ Capobianco, 2006, pp. 82-83

³⁹ Modestino, 2001, pp. 58-59

⁴⁰ Alberto, 2007, pp. 126-127

⁴¹ Capobianco, 2006, pp. 134-135

“You still have a little time to go”

Padre Pio went to visit his dying friend Don Peppino Massa on March 19th 1947. Padre Pio heard his confession and comforted him. Then he added: “The hour of your encounter with Christ has not arrived yet. You still have a little time to go”. Don Peppino died in July 1947.⁴²

“Go home to your parents. In a week you are going to die.”

A policeman was on duty near Padre Pio during an official function. Padre Pio took him aside and told him: “Go home to your parents. In a week you are going to die.” “But I’m perfectly healthy” the man replied. “You will be even better in a week” Padre Pio insisted. The man listened to the advice, went on leave, and once at home he told his parents what Padre Pio had said. A week later he suddenly had a heart attack and died.⁴³

Modesto Vinelli

The photographer Modesto Vinelli testified that he used to see Padre Pio almost daily and take pictures of him. One day at the end of 1918 Padre Pio told him: “Modesto, we have fifty years ahead of us.”

He was also taking pictures on the day of the 25th anniversary, in 1943. Padre Pio told him: “Modesto remember that we still have 25 years to go.”

On September 20th 1968, Padre Pio told him: “Modesto, the fifty years are over.” Padre Pio died three days later. Modesto lived until 1983.^{44 45}

“It is decided that I will die of old age.”

Padre Romolo testified: Padre Pio told me many times: “*Statutum est mori senex.*” (It is decided that I will die of old age).⁴⁶ Padre Pio died at 81.

“You will have a peaceful death.”

Maria Teresa Brevi testified regarding what Padre Pio had told her mom after confession: “I will not give you any penance as you already have done it. Your sins are remitted because for 23 years you have been looking after your husband who is in a wheelchair. You have had a long hard road, but you will have a tranquil peaceful death.”

“The word of Padre Pio came true,” the daughter reported.⁴⁷

“Padre Bernardo is in agony”

On December 30th 1937 Padre Pio was praying in the choir with Padre Atanasio Leonardo da Teano and other friars. Suddenly he said: “Let’s pray for our Provincial Padre Bernardo d’Alpicella who is in agony.” Nobody knew that he was sick.

The day after they were told that Padre Bernardo had suddenly died.⁴⁸

“I have been sick all my life, and I will die healthy.”

Cleonice Morcaldi witnessed an exchange between a woman and Padre Pio in the hallway: “Padre, heal me, I am always in the hospitals.” Padre Pio replied: “My daughter, I was born sick,

⁴² Alberto, 2007, pp. 65-66

⁴³ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 70-71

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 57-58

⁴⁵ Alberto, 2007, pp. 355-357

⁴⁶ Castelli, 2011, p. 181

⁴⁷ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 56

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 285

I have been sick all my life, and” - grinning to a nearby friar – “I will die healthy.” (Padre Pio died in his chair, of no specific illness, with the wounds completely healed).⁴⁹

Confessions out of turn

“I would have done it just for the love of you.”

The young son of Dr. Remo Vincenti was in line to confess to Padre Pio. He had confessed two days before. Dr. Vincenti knew that Padre Pio would first ask “How long has it been since you last confessed?” And if it was less than eight days would send a person away.

Dr. Vincenti, a spiritual child, prayed that Padre Pio would fulfill the wish of his son. The child confessed without being sent away.

Later, Padre Pio passing in the hallway told Dr. Vincenti: “I would have done it just for the love of you.”⁵⁰

“Who is signora Caccioppoli?”

Many, many people wanted to confess to Padre Pio. So, a registry to sign up in person was started. People would then return home and wait for a phone call. For men, the wait was about a month; for women, from 10 to 12 weeks.

The whole process was strictly run, and there was no way to get around it. The board and lodging ladies at the place where the pilgrims stayed checked the reservation book every morning. Then they would call the person when their turn was two to three days away.

A woman was called and told that her turn would come in two days. The woman arrived on time and waited for a friar to call her so that she could join the queue for Confession. Her name was not called.

She went to ask the friar about it, and to her dismay she realized that the board and lodging lady, Signora Vasini, had called the wrong person, and that in fact she was scheduled for Confession seven or eight days later. The friar was unmovable; he could do nothing to help. Confessions with Padre Pio started.

The woman left the sacristy, went outside the church, and sat on the bench around an elm tree, telling the other people in her party and strangers what had happened. No words could comfort her.

At a certain point she stood up, raised her arm and pointing at the church said: “If you really are the Padre Pio they say you are, send your friar right away, so that I can confess to you.”

Between one and three minutes passed. Then a friar, (not the one keeping the reservations), came to the door, looked around, and said: “Who is Signora Caccioppoli? Padre Pio is waiting for you. He says that is your turn to confess.”

The woman moved towards the friar despite her shaky legs. She went inside, and confessed to Padre Pio.

Pope Paul VI

“It’s going to be Montini.”

On June 3, 1963 Pope John XXIII died. The friars kept pestering Padre Pio about the Conclave, until he said: “It’s going to be Montini. Now will you be quiet?” On June 23, 1963 Montini was elected Pope Paul VI.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 145

⁵⁰ D’Ascanio, 1994, p. 8

⁵¹ Schug, 1987, p. 70

"Inform him that he will be elected pope"

In 1959 Cardinal Montini of Milan gave to Alberto Galletti a message for Padre Pio, asking for particular prayers. Padre Pio told Alberto that he promised fervent prayers, and also told Alberto to inform him that he would be elected pope, adding: "Do you understand what you are to tell him? Tell him so because he must get ready." Cardinal Montini was taken by surprise, and told Alberto: "Oh! The strange knowledge of the saints!"^{52 53}

Military

"Go now. It is now safe for you to leave. Trust our Lady."

In September 1943, Luigi Pulcinelli was a student officer at the XIIth regiment near Foggia. The Germans attacked and took over the headquarters. He barely escaped towards the mountains with five other soldiers. They were advised to ask for help at the convent.

"We reached the convent, and a friar was celebrating Mass, and we stayed in the darkest part of the rear of the church so as not to attract attention.

At the end of the Mass the friar turned to perform the blessing. Before he did so, he invited those present to procure civilian clothes for the disbanded soldiers who had just arrived. How did he know?

We went out of the church and asked who the friar was. They said he was Padre Pio. We were petrified.

We were asked to go into the sacristy. There was Padre Pio. He embraced us and talked to us. Then we were served a meal fit for a king by Mary Pyle.

Padre Pio told us not to leave until he said so. We went to ask him every day. On the fifth day he said: "Go now. It is now safe for you to leave. Trust our Lady." We left, and marched for five days and finally reached Campobasso without meeting any Germans."

After a two-day train journey, Luigi arrived in his hometown of Castiglione del Lago. How happy he was to finally be reunited with his mother, father, brother, and friends. He felt that he had truly been protected on his journey back to his home.

In 1948, five years after his first visit, Luigi Pulcinelli returned once again to the monastery of Our Lady of Grace in San Giovanni Rotondo. But this time he came under much happier circumstances. It was his honeymoon, and he had come to the monastery to introduce Padre Pio to his new bride. He returned many more times to the monastery of Our Lady of Grace.⁵⁴

Missing in action

During World War II, two moms from Bologna asked Padre Pio about their sons who were missing in action. To the first one Padre Pio said: "He is in good health and there are good hopes. He will return home in a few months". He was back at home after three months.

To the other mom Padre Pio said: "He too will return soon." He was home in one month.⁵⁵

"Run for it! Run for it!"

Major Teseo Isani of the Italian Army, stationed in Verona, had been hiding an American soldier in his home. He was discovered, court martialed, and sentenced to die on December 13th 1944.

He heard a voice: "Run for it! Run for it!" He thought he was hallucinating. The voice became louder: "Run for it! Run for it!"

He thought it might be his dead father who wanted to save him.

⁵² Ingoldsby, 1978, pp. 95-96

⁵³ Multiple, 2009, p. 32

⁵⁴ Source: <https://plus.google.com/+PadrepiodevotionsOrg4you/posts/XuBtzTFjkSt>

⁵⁵ Parente, 1958, pp. 89-90

When he heard "Run for it! Run for it!" the third time, he started running. The guard said: "Stop or I will shoot." He didn't stop, and the guard didn't shoot. He kept running until he was safe.

Years later, while in Bari he heard about Padre Pio and went to see him, and confessed to him. After confession Padre Pio smiled and said: "Run for it!" Teseo: "Oh! My God! That was your voice!" The major started crying.⁵⁶

"He has already been sorted out."

Dr. Carlo Colalillo from Boiano, Campobasso, testified that after WWII he had just been discharged from the Army on August 1st 1946. He went back home and was depressed because he had no money and no job. His sister had already planned to see Padre Pio and told her brother that she would tell Padre Pio about him.

Padre Pio told her: "He has already been sorted out." She looked puzzled, not understanding the meaning. Padre Pio: "Have you or have you not understood that your brother already has a job?" She was confused. On arrival back home, her brother told her that he had just been offered an important job and had accepted it.⁵⁷

"No. You are not going to Greece."

Dr. Francesco Lotti knew Padre Pio since childhood. During WWII he had been assigned to a regiment of infantry stationed in Greece. Before his departure he went to say good-bye to Padre Pio. Padre Pio looked at him in a strangely anxious manner, and then said: "No. You are not going to Greece."

On returning to the barracks, Dr. Lotti was told that the departure had been delayed and he was given papers with a new departing date: July 25th 1943.

On that day the fascist government was overthrown, and the new government cancelled the engagement overseas and ordered all the troops to stay in Italy.

Dr. Lotti never went to Greece.⁵⁸

"You naughty boys. You caused one of my brothers to commit sin!"

Mario Avignone reported: "I was stationed in Italy at Cerignola with the 304th Bomb Wing of the 15th Air Force under commanding General Nathan F. Twining. In 1945 four of us went to see Padre Pio. We returned several times.

One day Leo, Joe and I were at the monastery, and we asked Padre Ignazio if we could have a piece of one of his bandages that he'd worn over his stigmata. "Oh, no!" he said. What you're asking me to do is forbidden, and I could get into a lot of trouble."

We finally convinced him to get one of those bandages if we promised not to tell anybody — including Padre Pio. He got us one small bandage and divided it in three.

We came back to the monastery not so long after, and Padre Pio stopped us in the hallway. "You naughty boys," he said, really stern. "You caused one of my brothers to commit sin!" "Come on, Padre Pio," says Joe, "what did we do?" "You know what you did," he said. "You had Padre Ignazio sneak into my room and take one of the bandages and give it to you."

Nobody told him, but you couldn't fool Padre Pio. He just knew things, which is why he was such a popular confessor. He was serious.

But then he shook his head and his face sort of softened. He said to Father Ignatius, "I forgive you, Father. And I forgive you boys, too, but don't go telling anybody. I wore those bandages over my heart. Go in peace." And we did.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Gaudiose, 1974, pp. 134-136

⁵⁷ Iasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 249-250

⁵⁸ Parente, 1968, pp. 87-89

⁵⁹ Viewed at: http://www.ncregister.com/site/article/a_veteran_meets_the_faith

“Anytime I ask you to do something for me, it will work out.”

In 1944 Joe Asterita was assistant chaplain in the Fifteenth Army Air Force. He was of the same Neapolitan origin as Padre Pio. He was fluent in Italian, and often translated for the other GI's.

One day Padre Pio told him that five people needed a ride back to Foggia. Joe refused because it was prohibited to transport civilians in military vehicles.

Padre Pio said: "Remember this. Anytime I ask you to do something for me, it will work out. You need to have no fear." Joe was convinced, and allowed the two men, two women, and a little child in his military jeep. On the road Joe saw two Military Police Officers. They looked into the jeep and passed right on.

At that moment the air become filled with the perfume of Padre Pio. As they continued, they encountered many MP's but Joe was never pulled over. The perfume was smelled until the five Italians were dropped off safely.⁶⁰

“How many times you called me that night!”

Padre Valentino da San Marco in Lami testified that during the war he was in Emilia Romagna and needed to go home in Southern Italy. To do so he had to cross the frontline.

One night he started the trip on foot. At every step he was afraid of being killed and continually cried “Padre Pio help me!” He crossed the front line safely.

Weeks later he went to see Padre Pio. Padre Pio, as soon as he saw him, said: “How many times you called me that night, how many times! Let us thank the Lord.”⁶¹

My ears

“When will you stop buzzing in my ear?”

A woman whose husband was ill kept getting more and more agitated during Mass, thinking that with that entire crowd she wouldn't be able to tell Padre Pio about her husband. At the end of the Mass people rushed into the sacristy and she was far away from him. Padre Pio, looking at her from afar, said: “When will you stop buzzing in my ear? Do you think I am deaf? I have understood. Go home and everything will be all right.”⁶²

“Do you think I am deaf?”

Padre Francesco Napolitano presented some pilgrims from Castellammare di Stabia to Padre Pio. They wished to ask for his prayers. One of the ladies in the group said to Padre Pio: “We have been calling on you every moment.” Padre Pio: “Yes. Do you think I am deaf? You have been buzzing in my ears with all those little things of yours.”⁶³

On the road

“Go slowly and be careful.”

Luciano Livellara from Milano asked Padre Pio for a blessing before driving back home.

Padre Pio: “Go slowly! Go slowly and be careful I said.” Luciano drove back very slowly.

Just out of the city of Ancona a boy run in the middle of the street. Luciano pulled the brakes with all his strength. He stopped only a few inches from the boy.”⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 265-266

⁶¹ Iasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 240-241

⁶² Napolitano, 1979, pp. 55-56

⁶³ Ibid., p. 183

⁶⁴ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 285

“Boy, did the wasp bite you?”

Padre Onorato reported that he went with a friend on a Vespa (an Italian motorcycle the name of which translates as *wasp* in English) from San Giovanni Rotondo to Monte Sant’Angelo.

Halfway through the journey, they run out of gas. The gas station was closed. They tried again, and the engine started, and they were able to get back to the square in front of convent, where the engine sputtered and stopped.

The Vespa had run 15 kilometers without gas.

Back in the convent Padre Pio said smiling: “Boy, did the wasp bite you?”

“You will leave the day after tomorrow.”

Dr. Angelo Ruzzi went to say goodbye to Padre Pio. He was about to leave in the morning. Padre Pio: “If you don’t leave tomorrow you will leave the day after.” In the morning Dr. Ruzzi went to the bus station, and found out that the trip had been canceled. He left the day after.⁶⁵

“Well, here is the imposter.”

While on a bus in an organized trip to see Padre Pio in 1961, a man told his wife: “I’m just going to accompany you, because I don’t believe in this imposter.”

When Padre Pio passed the man, he put his hand on his head and said: “Well, here is the imposter.” The man asked for forgiveness.

Knowing

“You only paid 25,000 lire”

Aure’ Caviggioli an antique art dealer from Montecarlo had a painting of the Virgin Mary that he had bought for twenty-five thousand lire. He decided to give it to Padre Pio as a present.

The day before making the trip to San Giovanni Rotondo he showed the painting to a friend, stating that it was worth millions.

That night, Padre Pio appeared to him in a dream and said: “Why are you saying that the painting is worth millions, if you only paid 25,000 lire?”

When Aure’ presented the painting to Padre Pio, he started laughing and said: “What did you dream about last night, you rogue?”

Aure’ laughed too.⁶⁶

“You are cheating”

The famous tenor Beniamino Gigli went to visit Padre Pio in a chauffeured limousine, at the peak of his career.

In Italian Beniamino means *beloved* and Gigli means *lily*.

When Padre Pio saw him, he said: “You call yourself “lily” but you are cheating on your wife and have a secret relationship with another woman. You call yourself “beloved”, but you are not beloved of God.”

The famous tenor absorbed the indictment and became a faithful friend of Padre Pio. He sang to him “Mamma” (Mommy), Padre Pio’s favorite song.⁶⁷

“Everything will go all right.”

When Dr. Nicola Bellantuono was still a medical student he asked Maria Ciaccia, who was going to see Padre Pio to inquire regarding a difficult exam he was about to take.

⁶⁵ Ruzzi, 2011, p. 25

⁶⁶ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 39-40

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 22-23

Padre Pio: "It will go all right." Then, gazing into space, he added: "Poor boy, poor boy."

A few days later Nicola started having severe abdominal pains. His father who was a doctor and three of his colleagues diagnosed acute peritonitis and said there was nothing to be done about it.

Maria went to Padre Pio again, and said: "Padre, Nicolino is dying." Padre Pio: "What do you mean? Everything will go all right." Nicolino fully recovered and eventually became a doctor in Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza.⁶⁸

"You have a dirty face!"

Dr. Saltamerenda, an atheist, was convinced by Mario Cavaliere to visit San Giovanni Rotondo.

Padre Pio caught sight of him behind a group of men and called out to him: "Genoese, you have a dirty face! You live near the sea, but you don't know how to wash."

Later Padre Pio accepted his confession. Padre Pio suggested to him, one by one, the faults that had disorganized his life, even the most distant, and the forgotten ones.

"These were the most beautiful moments of my life", Saltamerenda recalled.^{69 70 71}

"This one will not die."

Graziella Gatta from Monte Sant'Angelo near San Giovanni Rotondo, was dying with typhoid fever. She had a little sister, Maria. The aunt decided to go to Padre Pio to ask for his prayers.

Padre Pio: "This one will not die."

The aunt went back home and Graziella rapidly recovered.

However, few days later Maria got typhoid fever. She rapidly deteriorated, and died on November 7th 1940.

The aunt understood the meaning of what Padre Pio had said: "This one will not die." Though Graziella recovered, her sister did not.⁷²

The necklace

A woman from Pesaro, the wife of a workman, testified that she brought her deaf-and-dumb daughter to Padre Pio. He cured her instantly. In an outburst of gratitude, the woman took a gold chain from the child's neck - the only object of value that she owned - and gave it to Padre Pio for the Virgin.

When she returned home she told everything to her husband. He flew into a rage at the offering she had made to Padre Pio. He said that she should have chosen some other article rather than the gift that he himself had made to his daughter.

The next morning, they found the chain on the bedside table.⁷³

"Join him with your prayers"

Padre Federico Carozza reported that he was in the square of St. Mary of Graces, and a desperate woman told him that she needed to talk to Padre Pio because her husband had filed for divorce.

He told her: "Padre Pio is now praying on the balcony. Go in the church and join him with your prayers." She did.

When she returned to her hotel, she found a phone message from her husband begging her to return home where he was waiting to embrace her.⁷⁴

⁶⁸ Iasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 306-307

⁶⁹ Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 125-130

⁷⁰ Del Fante, 1950, pp. 141-146

⁷¹ Gaudiose, 1974, pp. 122-124

⁷² Ibid., p. 134

⁷³ Viewed at: <https://olrl.org/lives/padrepio.shtml>

⁷⁴ Iasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 239-240

“Turn over a new leaf”

A woman from Chiavari testified that she convinced her husband to drive her to San Giovanni Rotondo. She hoped in her heart that Padre Pio would do something to stop her husband's libertine lifestyle.

They were both waiting in the hallway. When Padre Pio passed he looked at her husband and said to him: “What are you waiting for to turn over a new leaf. Are you waiting for your wife to tell you to?”⁷⁵

“Sell it as soon as possible.”

A couple in Florence owned a jewelry store on Ponte Vecchio, the famous bridge over the river Arno. They were mulling over whether to sell it, but were undecided.

They asked Padre Pio for advice, through his spiritual son Graziano Borelli. Padre Pio: “Sell it as soon as possible.”

They did not follow the advice fast enough. The flood of November 1966 destroyed all the stores on the bridge.⁷⁶

“Do you want more?”

Don Pasquale Cantalupo was suffering a painful illness when he confessed to Padre Pio. After the confession: “Aren't you going to give me a penance?” Padre Pio: “Haven't you already got enough? Do you want more?”⁷⁷

A blackguardly monk

One man, who was thrown out of the confessional by Padre Pio, stated: “What kind of blackguardly monk is that? He did not give me time to say a word, but straightway called me an old pig and told me to go away!”

Another person said to this man that Padre Pio probably had good reasons for calling him an old pig and treating him in this way. “I can't think why,” said the man who had been thrown out of the confessional; and then, after a pause, the man said: “unless it is because I happen to be living with a woman who is not my wife.”⁷⁸

“How did he know?”

“How did he know?”

Cardinal Giuseppe Siri on September 23, 1975 reported in a homily: “I had been hesitating for a long time about a decision to make. I had not talked to anybody about it. One day I received a telegram from Padre Pio explaining what to do. I followed the advice to the letter and everything ended for better. How did he know? I have never understood how this man could know what was going on in my mind.”^{79 80}

“Give me what you have in your pocket.”

A poor woman had been given some excellent Swiss cheese and she wanted to give some to Padre Pio. She made a little package and gave it to Pietruccio the blind, telling him that she was poor, and wanted him to deliver it to Padre Pio. Pietruccio put the little package in his pocket and

⁷⁵ lasenzaniro, 2009, p. 224

⁷⁶ Ibid., 293

⁷⁷ Ibid., 55-6

⁷⁸ McCaffery, 1978, pp. 58-60

⁷⁹ Ingoldsby, 1978, pp. 151-152

⁸⁰ Alessandro, 2010, 272-273

when, as usual, he accompanied Padre Pio to his room in his usual manner, he forgot about it. As he was leaving, Padre Pio said: "Give me what you have in your pocket, otherwise that woman will start crying "I'm poor; I'm poor."'⁸¹

"In great need of prayer."

Pitigrilli was a well-known materialist atheist writer from Argentina. Solicited by playwright Antonelli, he visited San Giovanni Rotondo unannounced, and sat in the dark in the back of the church during Mass.

Before leaving the altar, Padre Pio told the assembly: "Let us pray fervently for someone who is in great need of prayer. One day he will approach the Eucharistic table and will bring many with him who have been in error like himself." Pitigrilli took it personally and dissolved in tears.

Later Padre Pio told him: "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul. Truly, God is good to you."

Pitigrilli underwent a deep and lasting conversion. For more than thirty years he wrote plays, articles, and books with a Christian message.^{82 83}

"Your father is in America."

Alberto Cardone told Padre Pio: "It's a long time since I have heard from my father." He was in America, but Cardone had not mentioned this to Padre Pio."

Padre Pio: "Oh! your father is in America. He's better than you or I."⁸⁴

"You don't go to Mass."

In the sacristy Padre Pio told a man he had never met before: "You are a lawyer, aren't you? You are a good lawyer for others and a bad one for yourself. You don't go to Mass."⁸⁵

"You will win the Scudetto."

Helenio Herrera, the coach manager of the famous Italian soccer club Inter of Milan, was a devout Spanish gentleman. The Inter club went to nearby Foggia to play an important soccer game on January 31st 1965. On the eve of the match he visited Padre Pio with a group of players and towards the end of the conversation said jokingly: "Let us win tomorrow's game, and also the Championship! (Scudetto)."

Padre Pio smiling: "You will not win in our home town, but you will win the Scudetto." Foggia won the game 3-2, and Inter won the 1964/1965 championship.

"What are you glancing at?"

An elderly illiterate woman from San Mauro Pascoli, in the Emilia-Romagna region of Italy, went to confess to Padre Pio. But she did not know Italian. When the little door opened she heard him say in her own dialect: "When was the last time you confessed?"

Thinking that a joke was being played on her, she moved the curtain over a little to see who was on the other side of the grille. It was Padre Pio, who said, still in dialect, "What are you glancing at, instead of confessing?"

She did confess, and she felt as though Padre Pio was speaking like her own priest in San Mauro.⁸⁶

⁸¹ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 247

⁸² Ruffin, 1991, p. 243

⁸³ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 148

⁸⁴ Ruffin, 1991, p. 255

⁸⁵ lasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 189-190

⁸⁶ lasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 279-280

“You will get married on September 8th”

Giuseppe Cassano from San Giovanni Rotondo decided to get married on September 12th and went to Padre Pio to tell him the news.

Padre Pio: "No, you will get married on September 8th." When he returned home, his mom told him: Son, you can't marry on the 12th because your cousin has already chosen that date for her wedding. We might have to choose the 8th."

Joseph then let his mother know that Padre Pio had already told him.⁸⁷

“Say that you are Don Raffaele”

Dr. Angelo Ruzzi, a country doctor from Tolve in the province of Potenza, was known by everybody in town by his nickname “Don Raffaele”. He testified that the first time he met Padre Pio, there were also other visitors present, and he introduced himself to one of them: “I am Angelo Ruzzi”. The other visitor did not understand and said: “I beg your pardon?” Padre Pio, who had never met either of them, said: “Go on. Say that you are Don Raffaele, or this fellow won't know who you are.”⁸⁸

“You are Adriana’s father”

Adriana Pallotti was a spiritual daughter of Padre Pio. She testified that when her father went from Modena to San Giovanni Rotondo for the first time, Padre Pio, as soon as he saw him said: “You are Adriana’s father. Aren’t you?”⁸⁹

“He has had the Lord wait for 25 years”

Padre Pio was praying in thanksgiving after Mass when he was approached by brother Costantino. He told him that a man in a hurry was asking to confess to Padre Pio. Padre Pio told him to wait a little. After a while, brother Costantino returned to Padre Pio with the same request. Padre Pio: “He has had the Lord wait for 25 years before deciding to confess, and he cannot wait five minutes for me?”

Fra Constantino went back to the man who told him: “I am a chauffeur, and people are waiting for me in the car, I need to see Padre Pio. It has been 25 years since my last confession.”

“Here is what you were looking for.”

At Christmas time, Domenico Lops from San Giovanni Rotondo received as a special present from his aunts Maria and Antonietta Pompilio, a Baby Jesus statue that had been given to them by Padre Pio.

He put it in the nativity scene prepared in his room. He lit a small candle and by accident the scene caught on fire and was destroyed. The day after, he went to Padre Pio in tears to tell him what had happened.

Padre Pio was about to say Mass. He said: “Don’t worry you will get an identical one.” After mass Padre Pio went into the sacristy and a man approached him, giving him a little package. Padre Pio didn’t open it, but gave it to Domenico, saying: “Here is what you were looking for.”

Back home Domenico opened the package. It contained a Baby Jesus exactly like the one that had been given to him by his aunts.”⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 245

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 246

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 246

⁹⁰ Covino, 2007, pp. 211-212

“How about when you threw a shoe at me?”

Nicola La Banca was a childhood friend of Padre Pio. Many years later as a married adult, he developed a terrible toothache. His wife Filomena, pointed to a framed picture of Padre Pio on the wall, and suggested that he pray to his childhood friend.

Nicola was so mad at the idea that he threw a shoe at the picture. Years later he happened to confess to Padre Pio. Padre Pio: “Anything else?” “No. I have told you all my sins.” Padre Pio: “How about when you threw a shoe at me?”⁹¹

“OK. Here is my hand”

Padre Pio, going from his cell to the confessional, had to pass through a narrow hallway. The hallway was always jammed with people when Padre Pio passed.

Teresa Venezia from Tolve, Potenza, testified that she was on her knees hoping to kiss Padre Pio's hand when he passed. He passed but didn't stop and went on. She felt bad, and in her heart complained that her wish had not been fulfilled. Padre Pio was already several yards away. Suddenly, he stopped, turned around, and came straight towards her saying: "OK. Here is my hand."⁹²

“She is going to live a long time”

Rosario Balacco testified in 1996 that when he was 25 and his mother 65, he told Padre Pio that he was afraid of being left alone. Padre Pio: “She certainly is going to live a long time”. Rosario reported that his mom had died at age 96.⁹³

“Don't worry. Just wait and see.”

In 1947, the day of ordination to the priesthood was approaching for Lino Barbatì. At the same time his sister was dying of tuberculosis, his brother was sick in bed, and his mother had terminal cancer.

He told Padre Pio: “I am so depressed about it all.” Padre Pio: “Don't worry. Everything is going to be just fine. Your sister is going to give you a party. Just wait and see.”

Padre Lino Barbatì reported thirty years later: “The day of my ordination everything was just wonderful, and my sister threw a great party for me, just as Padre Pio had predicted.”⁹⁴

“And you laugh at her.”

A man told Padre Pio: "My wife kneels in front of your picture every night and asks for your blessing." "Yes, I know. And you laugh at her when she does that." That was true.⁹⁵

“I see at least 32 of them!”

"Father my daughter is sick." "And you are much sicker than your daughter." "No, no, I'm feeling very well." "How can you be well if you have so many sins on your conscience? I see at least 32 of them."^{96 97}

“Desperate cases need desperate remedies.”

Padre Pio told John McCaffery of a case happened in Pietrelcina, when he needed to make use of a desperate remedy. “I was attending a sick man who, the doctor told me, would not last the

⁹¹ Modestino, 2001, p. 41

⁹² Iasenzaniro, 2006, 239

⁹³ Ibid., p. 289

⁹⁴ Schug, 1987, pp. 3-4

⁹⁵ Capuano, 2012, p. 397

⁹⁶ Winowska, 1988, p. 37

⁹⁷ Malatesta, 2002, p. 240

night. When I offered to hear his confession, he refused telling me he would confess when he felt better. I tried everything, and there was no way he could be persuaded. 'Well,' I thought, 'desperate cases need desperate remedies.' I went to the door and said to him, 'Goodbye, we shall meet again at the cemetery.' 'What do you mean?' I then told him what the doctor had said.

The man changed his mind. He did confess and received Holy Communion. He died with composure and resignation."⁹⁸

"Blind for beating his father."

A young woman came from Benevento to ask a grace for her husband who had become totally blind. Padre Pio said that her husband's only hope for salvation was to stay blind, as a punishment for beating his father.

The poor woman reported it to her husband. He was resistant at first, and then revealed that when he was 16 years of age, he had severely beaten his father with an iron rod.

Reading the mind

"Are you satisfied now?"

Padre Pio was praying and meditating. Fra' Daniele Natale kneeled nearby and had the idea that he would test to see whether Padre Pio was really able to read his mind.

Looking at Padre Pio he asked mentally if he would offer his prayers to the Lord. Padre Pio nodded. Not convinced, he asked mentally if the nodding was for him. Padre Pio nodded again. Still dubious, he thought that he needed a clearer explanation.

At that point Padre Pio turned to him, and said in a loud voice: "Yes. Are you satisfied now?"⁹⁹

"Send me a blessing."

Alma De Concini from Terzola, Province of Trento, testified that while she was in line waiting to be confessed by Padre Pio, she was told that there would be no more confessions for the day.

She had a thought: "Father, send me a blessing, I need it."

Instantly, Padre Pio turned his head away from the grille of the confessional, looked at her, made a blessing sign and then turned his face back to the grille.¹⁰⁰

"You already told me everything during Mass."

A man had not been to church for 35 years. A spiritual daughter of Padre Pio suggested that he visit San Giovanni Rotondo. He went, but during the night couldn't sleep. His mind was going over his life, and he formulated a mental list of the sins he had committed over the 35 years.

During Padre Pio's Mass his mind was still ruminating over the list. He went to confession, but his mind froze and he was unable to say a word. Padre Pio: "Courage, my son, you already told me everything during Mass."

Padre Pio told him his sins, and after the absolution said: "Go, and thank the Virgin."¹⁰¹

"You did already."

On May 25th, Lucia Pennelli, Padre Pio's niece wished to offer her best wishes as it was his birthday, but was not able to do it personally as he was so far away. So she did it in her thoughts. Some days later, after she had made her confession with Padre Pio at San Giovanni Rotondo, she said: "Happy birthday. Sorry I couldn't say it the 25th." Padre Pio replied: "But you did."¹⁰²

⁹⁸ McCaffery, 1978, pp. 99-100

⁹⁹ Pronzato, 2002, p. 152

¹⁰⁰ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 239

¹⁰¹ Winowska, 1988, pp. 39-40

¹⁰² Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 255

"You already asked me."

Enzo Picciafuoco from Campobasso testified that he had been told he could ask Padre Pio for something simply by thinking about it during Mass.

He did so.

Later, while in the hallway among the crowd of faithful, he called out to Padre Pio from a distance:

"Father, pray for my sister."

Padre Pio turned in his direction and said: "You already asked me."¹⁰³

¹⁰³ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 254

2 Bilocations: how did Padre Pio get there? Close to town and across the oceans

After Padre Pio received the wounds of Christ in 1918, he never left San Giovanni Rotondo. Yet many people all over the globe attest to having seen him and spoken to him, even to the present day.

Padre Pio's experience of bilocation

Padre Pio describes the experience of the bilocating person, under obedience:

"He knows what he wants, knows where he goes, but he doesn't know if it's the body or the soul that goes." ^{104 105 106 107 108 109}

"There is urgency, a grave danger, a soul or a body to save". ^{110 111}

"It did happen to me."

When Padre Pio was questioned under oath about bilocation by Bishop Rossi, Inquisitor from the Holy Office in 1921, he answered: "It did happen to me to be in the presence of this or that person, in this or that place. I do not know if my mind was transported there, or what I saw was some sort of representation of the place or person. I do not know if I was there with my body, or without it."

He offers an example: "One night I found myself at the bedside of a sick woman, Maria Massa, in San Giovanni Rotondo. I was in the convent. I think I was praying. I didn't know her personally. She had been recommended to me. It must have been over a year ago." ¹¹²

Padre Romolo and the words of the sacramental absolution

Padre Romolo da San Marco in Lamis testified on June 20th 1921: "Padre Pio repeats very often the words of the sacramental absolution, especially the words *absolvo* and *peccatis*. We have heard him at an open window, in sacristy, even during Mass. This might be related to bilocation." ¹¹³

The first known bilocation of Padre Pio

Padre Pio was 18, and studying philosophy in Sant'Elia a Pianisi, when he experienced bilocation for the first time. He had the presence of mind to write down his experience within three weeks and consign it to his superiors. ¹¹⁴

He wrote in February 1905: "A few days ago, an unusual thing happened to me. I was in the choir with Fra' Atanasio at about 11 PM on January 18th 1905, when I found myself far away in Udine, where a father was dying and a child was being born. The Virgin Mary told me: 'I'm entrusting this

¹⁰⁴ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 92

¹⁰⁵ Bruno, 1970, p. 24

¹⁰⁶ Galeone, 2009, p. 124

¹⁰⁷ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 110

¹⁰⁸ Parente, 1968, pp. 92-93

¹⁰⁹ Capobianco, 2006, pp. 160-161

¹¹⁰ Winowska, 1988, p. 102

¹¹¹ Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 55-78

¹¹² Caselli, 2011, p. 208 (Castelli)

¹¹³ Ibid., pp. 87-88

¹¹⁴ Ruffin, 1991, p. 66

child to you. One day she will come to you, but you will meet her first in Saint Peter's.' After that I found myself back in the choir." ^{115 116}

The girl to be born was Marchioness Giovanna Rizzani Boschi, known to her friends as Vanina. ¹¹⁷ She is one of six witnesses who testified at the Process of Beatification. She was born on January 18th 1905. Her life was full of coincidences that were not rationally explainable.

Padre Pio's handwritten note was kept for years by Padre Agostino. Later he gave it to Giovanna. Giovanna asked Padre Pio about it, and he confirmed its authenticity. ^{118 119}

The dying person was her father, Giovanni Battista Rizzani. His wife Leonilde had been praying at his bedside, hoping for a last-minute conversion. Leonilde saw a young Capuchin standing over the husband's bed. As soon she looked at him he left the room and disappeared down the corridor.

She was then caught by violent contractions and gave birth to a five-weeks premature girl.

After the death of her husband, Leonilde moved with her daughter to Rome to live with her parents. In the summer of 1922 Giovanna went with a friend for confession in St. Peter's basilica. When they arrived, it was almost closing time and they were told to come back the following day. On the way out, Giovanna saw a Capuchin hurriedly enter a confessional. She immediately went to him and confessed. After confession, she and her friend waited for the Capuchin to leave the confessional in order to greet him. The custodian saw them and asked them to leave. They told him about the Capuchin in the confessional. The man looked in the confessional. It was empty.

In 1923 Giovanna heard about Padre Pio and went to see him with some friends.

He told her: "I know you. You were born the day your father died. I have been waiting for you all these years." She replied: "You are mistaking me for someone else." Padre Pio: "No. You already know me. Last year in St. Peter's I was the Capuchin priest who confessed you. Don't you remember?"

She was very surprised and confused.

Padre Pio continued: "Giovanna, the Virgin Mary took me to Udine just before you were born into the world, and I witnessed your father's death. Our Lady informed me that his wife was about to give birth to a girl and that she was placing the child under my care. My daughter, you are my responsibility. One day you will be present at my death."

Giovanna was perplexed and filled with emotion. She said: "Should I become a nun?" Padre Pio: "No. Come frequently to San Giovanni Rotondo and I will guide your soul."

Many years later, she heard the voice of Padre Pio: "Come to San Giovanni Rotondo soon because I'm going away." Giovanna was now an elderly lady. She went accompanied by her friend Margherita Hamilton four days before Padre Pio's death. She confessed to him, and he concluded: "I absolve you now of all the sins you have ever committed. I am going away."

On the night of Padre Pio's death, Giovanna woke up suddenly and said to her friend "Padre Pio is dead." They both left the hotel room and went toward the convent in the middle of the night. Already a small crowd had gathered in the square in front of the church where a friar was announcing the death of Padre Pio. Later she described the vision she had of Padre Pio's cell the

¹¹⁵ Epistolario IV, 2012, pp. 1027-1029

¹¹⁶ D'Apolito, 2010, pp. 315-316

¹¹⁷ Bruno, 1970, pp. 105-110

¹¹⁸ Epistolario IV, 2012, p. 1027

¹¹⁹ Capuano, 2012, pp. 247-250

night he died. She reported every detail of what had happened, and described every person that was in the room.^{120 121 122 123 124 125 126}

On September 23rd 1978, Padre Paolo Covino who had administered the last rites to Padre Pio was in the square of the church of St. Mary of the Graces. A woman asked him: "Are you Padre Paolo? I saw you in a vision, administering the last rites to Padre Pio on September 23rd 1968." The woman was Giovanna Rizzani.¹²⁷

Padre Pio at the deathbed of Padre Vittore in Foggia

Padre Vittore da Canosa was dying in his cell in the Foggia convent. He told Padre Rosario: "What a grace I received this evening! If I live I will write it down; if not, I will tell you about it." They were to be his last words. He died without being able to write or tell of the grace he had received. Padre Rosario later told other friars about the episode.

One of them, Padre Francesco, reported that at the time of the death of Padre Vittore he was in San Giovanni Rotondo taking care of Padre Pio. Padre Pio was ill, alone in his room. Padre Francesco heard Padre Pio talking to somebody but he couldn't understand anything. A little later, he went to Padre Pio and told him that he had heard him talking while nobody else was in his room. Padre Pio: "Yes. I was hearing someone's confession."¹²⁸

Padre Pio has come near your sister, and he said: "Poor child!"

In 1918 Nina Campanile, one of the first spiritual daughters of Padre Pio, did not know what bilocation was. Her sister had multiple severe internal injuries in a fall, and fell into a coma. The doctors said that nothing could be done but to wait for her to die. Nina ran to the friary and Padre Pio told her that her sister would recover. Nina went back to her sister, but she was still unresponsive. She called, pinched, and tapped her to no avail. A friend of Nina's was there in the room and all of a sudden, she turned pale.

Nina asked her if she was feeling sick. She replied: "Padre Pio is here." Nina: "What do you mean?" The friend: "Padre Pio has come near your sister, and he said: 'Poor child!'" Ten minutes later she said: "Now he has gone away." Nina was very puzzled. She was now looking at her sister, and saw her suddenly regain consciousness and say: "I feel much better." Nina looked at her watch. It was 8:00 PM.

The following morning, Nina went straight to the convent and asked Padre Pio point blank: "What time did you come to my house last night?" Without batting an eye, he said in a matter of fact way: "Around eight o'clock."¹²⁹

Margherita's alarm clock

Margherita was sharing a small flat with two other girls. She got up every morning to go to Padre Pio's Mass. She was woken up "by the alarm clock in the hallway". On day she told Padre Pio: "I saved some money and would like to buy my own alarm clock. What do you think?" Padre Pio: "Well, it's about time!" She bought the alarm clock and brought it home. She told the other girls:

¹²⁰ Ingoldsby, 1978, pp. 26-29

¹²¹ Schug, 1987, pp. 14-30

¹²² Iasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 358-359

¹²³ Gallagher, 1995, pp. 35-38

¹²⁴ Chiron, 1999, pp. 39-40

¹²⁵ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 67-70

¹²⁶ Alberto, 2007, pp. 327-354

¹²⁷ Covino, 2007, pp. 241-242

¹²⁸ Capobianco, 2006, pp. 108-110

¹²⁹ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 144-145

“Listen, don’t worry anymore about setting the alarm for me in the morning. The girls: “What are you talking about? There has never been an alarm clock in the house!”¹³⁰

High in the Alps

Padre Alessio entered Padre Pio’s room one night and found him shivering, even though it was a warm evening. He piled blankets upon him without result. Later he learned that at that very hour, a man dying high in the Alps insisted that Padre Pio was present at his side.¹³¹

Desiderio Magnani repairing the car

In August 1962, Desiderio Magnani of Padua was repairing the car in his garage, lying in a cavity beneath it. The car suddenly caught fire and caused very severe burns, including his face. In the hospital the doctors gave little hope of survival because 60% of his body had been burned, he was running a high fever, and kidney block and heart failure had set in. His sister sent a telegram to Padre Pio. The next day Desiderio awakened as if from a deep sleep, and told his sister that he had seen a friar besides his bed who blessed him. In a short while he was completely healed.¹³²

To the Convent in Pietrelcina

On December 13th 1941 Padre Agostino asked Padre Pio: “Are you going to Pietrelcina for the grand opening of the convent?” “I will be there in Pietrelcina, and at the same time I will be in the confessional in San Giovanni Rotondo.”^{133 134}

To the church of the Holy Family in Pietrelcina

The new church of the Holy Family in Pietrelcina was consecrated in 1951. Padre Alberto D’Apolito went from San Giovanni Rotondo to attend the ceremony. Upon his return he told Padre Pio: “Someday you should go and see how beautiful the church is!” Padre Pio: “I was there. I can describe to you the minutest details, such as the number of steps to the entrance; and this is something that you don’t know!”¹³⁵

Padre Alberto later wrote: “In fact, I had never counted the steps.”^{136 137}

To Padre Benedetto dying in the convent of San Severo

On July 18, 1942, Padre Benedetto, former spiritual director of Padre Pio, was dying in the convent of San Severo. Padre Aurelio, the guardian, asked him if he would like them to send for Padre Pio.

Padre Benedetto replied: “No, there is no need to send for him. He is here beside me.”^{138 139}

“I assisted her. She went straight to Paradise.”

Padre Nazareno D’Arpaie who was superior of the convent of St. Anne in Foggia, at the time when Padre Pio was residing there reported that on the evening of march 24th 1916, he had visited the dying noblewoman Raffaelina Cerase together with Padre Pio. Padre Nazareno wrote: “Before we left the room, I gave her the absolution *in articulo mortis*, then we both returned to the convent.

¹³⁰ Duchess Suzanne, 1983, pp. 127-128

¹³¹ Ruffin, 1991, p. 325

¹³² Ingoldsby, 1978, pp. 89-90

¹³³ Agostino, 2012, p. 168

¹³⁴ Alberto, 2007, p. 129

¹³⁵ Ruffin, 1991, p. 326

¹³⁶ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 57

¹³⁷ Ruffin, 1991, p. 192

¹³⁸ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 57

¹³⁹ Ruffin, 1991, p. 192

At 4 in the morning, someone knocked at my door. I got up hastily and was greeted by a man who asked for four candle holders to place at the death bed of Raffaelina Cerase, who had just passed away. I ran to Padre Pio's room in order to let him know about the death of our beloved Franciscan tertiary. He calmly turned to me and said: "I know! I assisted her. She went straight to Paradise." Padre Nazareno concluded: "I think that Padre Pio could have been at her bedside thanks to a prodigious bilocation."¹⁴⁰

At the Holy Office, as reported by Venerable Madre Speranza

In 1970 Madre Speranza di Colleva (now Venerable) told journalist Renzo Allegri: "At the Holy Office I saw Padre Pio every day for a whole year. He used some half gloves on his hands to hide the wounds. I would greet him, kiss his hand, and sometimes we exchanged some words. This took place between 1937 and 1939 when I was working at Sant'Uffizio (Holy Office)."¹⁴¹

Madre Speranza confirmed the story to Padre Alberto.^{142 143}

At a papal meeting of Pope Pius XI

Cardinal Silj reported an episode that happened while he was in a meeting with Pope Pius XI and several cardinals, debating about whether or not to suspend Padre Pio *a divinis* (meaning "from all priestly functions").

While the pope was speaking during the meeting, a Capuchin friar appeared, knelt, and kissed his feet saying "Your Holiness, for the good of the Church, do not take this course of action." He then asked for the Pope's blessing, kissed his feet again, rose, and left.

The pope asked: "Who let that friar in?" The prelates ran outside to upbraid the guards for letting the friar in. All the guards strongly denied having seen any friar.

The Pope grew silent. He then ordered Cardinal Silj to ascertain where Padre Pio was that day and hour.

Silj went to San Giovanni Rotondo with his sister-in-law Countess Virginia Silj-Salviucci. Cardinal Silj asked the superior of the convent to give him details regarding where Padre Pio was at that particular date and time. The superior gave him the details requested.

Cardinal Silj reported to the Pope that Padre Pio was in the choir of his friary, saying the Office. Pope Pius XI never again raised the issue of suspending Padre Pio from his priestly faculties.

This episode was reported by Countess Virginia Silj-Salviucci to Padre Pio Dellepiane, and revealed only after the death of Pope Pius XI.^{144 145}

Bilocation in times of war

Saving General Luigi Cadorna

After the defeat of Caporetto on November 12th 1917, General Luigi Cadorna, Supreme Commander of the Italian Army was about to pull the trigger to shoot himself. A friar appeared in front of him. "General, you will not do this stupidity!" The General put his gun away.

After the war Cadorna recognized Padre Pio in a picture and went to visit him unannounced.

Padre Pio from afar: "Yeah, general, we had a narrow escape that night!"^{146 147}

(In 1917 Padre Pio was a soldier in the Italian Army, but on sick leave).

¹⁴⁰ Chiron, 1999, pp. 88-89

¹⁴¹ Schug, 1987, pp. 45-46

¹⁴² Ibid., pp. 45-46

¹⁴³ Alberto, 2007, pp. 362-364

¹⁴⁴ Peroni, 2002, pp. 325-6

¹⁴⁵ Ruffin, 1991, p. 198

¹⁴⁶ Winkowska, 1988, p. 100

¹⁴⁷ Capuano, 2012, pp. 250-251

Saving a Captain of infantry on the battlefield

"I was the Captain of an infantry battalion. One day during a terrible battle I saw a friar who told me: "Captain, come here immediately." I went towards him, and before I reached him a grenade exploded on the spot where I had been. I looked back and there was a large hole there. I would have been blown away. I looked at the friar again, but he was no more to be seen. Fellow soldiers told me of similar episodes, talking about a friar in San Giovanni Rotondo. In 1919, after the war I went there out of curiosity. When I saw Padre Pio in the sacristy I said: "That's him. I can't be mistaken." I told Padre Pio: "Thank you for saving me from death." Padre Pio replied: "You don't have to thank me, son. You have to thank the Lord and the Virgin." ^{148 149}

Bilocation during a bombardment in Rimini

Francesco Cavicchi and his wife visited Padre Pio at San Giovanni Rotondo in June 1967. He had confessed elsewhere three days beforehand, but wanted to confess to Padre Pio anyway. The rule was at least seven days between confessions. He stood in line and when his turn was approaching he began to get agitated. But Padre Pio called him from the line said: "Come forward, my son, I have been waiting for you for a long time."

Padre Pio started the confession asking: "How many days has it been since your last confession?" Francesco said that he couldn't remember. Padre Pio: "You have a short memory, don't you? But let me ask you this. Do you remember the bombardment in Rimini many years back? Do you remember the air raid shelter? Do you remember the trolley bus? But why am I asking you to go back in time? You cannot even remember what you did less than a week ago!"

At that point Francesco began to recall that in November 1943 when he was 28 years old, he was riding the trolley bus with about ten other people, including a middle-aged monk. Then the bombs started falling. Francesco had difficulty getting out of the bombed bus to reach the air-raid shelter and thought he was about to die. The monk helped him.

Once in the shelter, the Capuchin monk began to recite the rosary and inspired calm and confidence in everyone. After the sirens gave the 'all clear' signal, the capuchin monk was the first to leave.

Suddenly Francesco said: "Were you the monk?" "Well, who do you think it was?" ¹⁵⁰

Bilocation to the US

I have been there

Padre Francesco Napolitano had just returned from New York and was describing to the friars in the refectory what he had seen in America. Padre Pio was intent on listening to him, and then said: "You have been there only once. I have been hundreds of times." ¹⁵¹

A trip to America: "How many miracles do you expect the Lord to perform!"

Padre Rosario da Aliminusa, superior of the convent for three years, kept a diary of what was going on about Padre Pio. He wrote of a woman in America. She had an incurable tumor and she saw Padre Pio who assured her that she would be cured. She was cured and lived a normal life.

Some days later, Padre Eusebio da Castelpetroso read the description and told Padre Pio: "So you took a trip to America? I found out that you went to see a lady who had a tumor." Padre Pio: "How did you find out?" Padre Eusebio did not answer the question, but asked Padre Pio how he

¹⁴⁸ di Flumeri, 1996. Positio III/1, p. 812

¹⁴⁹ da Ripabottoni, 2010, pp. 264-265

¹⁵⁰ Source: <http://www.padrepiofoundation.com/link1.htm>

¹⁵¹ Napolitano, 1979, p. 183

managed with the language. Padre Pio: "How many miracles do you expect the Lord to perform!"¹⁵²

American spiritual child

"Father, would you take me on as a spiritual child?" "Yes." "But next week I will be leaving for America." Padre Pio: "And you think that I can't reach you there and slap you if you don't behave?"¹⁵³

Bilocation to St. Vincent's Hospital in NYC

Father Joseph Pius reported that in 1967 an American Lady turned up at the convent. She had been admitted to St. Vincent's Hospital in New York, dying of cancer. One day while she was praying, she saw padre Pio appear at her bedside. He smiled at her, blessed her, and then was gone. The woman recovered completely.¹⁵⁴

Bilocation to the USA (Wisconsin)

On June 25, 1950 Padre Pio was seen attending to the death of a fellow monk in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, without leaving the convent. When asked about it he said: "If Christ multiplied the loaves and fishes, why cannot He multiply me?"¹⁵⁵

Wisconsin: Padre Dominic Meyer's father

While Padre Dominic Meyer was in San Giovanni Rotondo helping Padre Pio, his father was dying in Wisconsin. The last time he has seen his father, his father had made a request: "Son, you are Padre Pio's friend. You know him well. Will you ask him to help me here when my time comes?"

The first time Padre Dominic was alone with Padre Pio, he explained, apologized, and made the request. Padre Pio slowly nodded. Back in Wisconsin, the father was staying in the house of a married daughter.

One beautiful afternoon, since he couldn't walk, the daughter and her husband helped him from his bedroom to the porch, because he was unable to walk. Later that day when they went to bring him back to his room, he was not on the porch. Not a step had been heard, nor of any door opening or closing.

They hurried to his bedroom, and there he was, lying in bed, eyes closed, and mouth slightly open. "And Dominic," said his sister, "we saw a Host on his tongue."¹⁵⁶

Bilocation in Connecticut to Joe Spada after Padre Pio's death

Joe Spada was hospitalized with terminal cancer in 1975. He, his wife, the nurses and other people at the hospital were frequently overcome by the beautiful aroma of fresh flowers.

One night, Joe was alone and saw Padre Pio sitting beside him. When his wife Margie returned, her eyes fell on a handkerchief that she did not recognize. As she reached for it, Joe said, "That's Padre Pio's handkerchief. He put it there on the stand just before he left." Still today on several occasions, Padre Pio's handkerchief has given off the aroma of fresh flowers.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵² Ibid., pp. 183-184

¹⁵³ Parente, 2011b, p. 142

¹⁵⁴ Gallagher, 1995, p. 125

¹⁵⁵ Millman and Childers, 2009, p. 88

¹⁵⁶ McCaffery, 1978, pp. 33-34

¹⁵⁷ Source: www.padrepio.com/the-padre-pio-foundation-of-america/

Other Bilocations

Bilocation to England in order to assist at the death of King George V

On the evening of January 20th 1936, Dr. Guglielmo Sanguinetti was talking to Padre Pio in his cell.

Suddenly Padre Pio took to his knees and urged them to pray “for a soul that is soon to appear before the tribunal of God.” Afterwards Padre Pio said: “Do you know for whom you prayed? It was for the King of England.” Around midnight Padre Pio went to the room of Padre Aurelio: “Let us pray for a soul who at this moment is about to appear at the tribunal of God.”

The next day the newspapers announced the death of King George V.^{158 159 160 161 162 163}

Alice Jones in England, after Padre Pio’s death

In 1982, Alice Jones, a teacher, Episcopalian, had been bedridden for ten years after multiple surgeries for a neurofibroma paralyzing the left side. One day, Rev. Eric Fisher, a Catholic priest went to pray with her. “The priest was kneeling at my bedside. Suddenly, it was as though another person had come out of Rev. Fisher. I was terrified at the sight. The presence had the face of an old man with a beard. He showed me his hands, which had holes in them. He put his hands on me and said: ‘Get up and go.’ I did. I was no longer crippled.” A few days later, I realized that the old man was Padre Pio after seeing a photograph of him.”¹⁶⁴

Christy Gallagher in Donegal, Ireland

Christy Gallagher from Donegal, Ireland, was very ill in a hospital bed. He told his wife: “Padre Pio came to see me; he asked me whether I would like to receive Communion. I did.”

It was September 23rd 1968. He was brimming with joy. A few hours later, he heard the announcement that Padre Pio had died over the radio.¹⁶⁵

A man living alone in his apartment in Rome

A man living alone in his apartment in Rome had planned to visit Padre Pio. Lately there had been several burglaries in his neighborhood. There were no alarm systems at the time. He was undecided if to go, and prayed to Padre Pio: “I will come, but you watch my house.”

He went to Padre Pio, confessed, then decided to stay a little longer. The following day, Padre Pio passed him in the hallway and said: “You are still here? I am working protecting your door.”

Padre Eusebio Notte plucked up courage to ask Padre Pio: “You know this man’s house? Don’t you?” “How could I? I have not left the convent for so many years!” “But he saw you!” “Ah! That’s a different story. When such things occur, the Lord only permits the person concerned to be seen, not the surroundings.”¹⁶⁶

At the bedside of Concetta Bellarmini

In 1926, while she was in a critical condition, it was suggested to Concetta Bellarmini that she pray to Padre Pio. She did not know Padre Pio but prayed for his intercession. Later, a Capuchin friar appeared at her bedside, smiled, and said: “Sunday morning you will be healed.”

¹⁵⁸ Gallagher, 1995, p. 139

¹⁵⁹ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 27

¹⁶⁰ Ruffin, 1991, p. 241

¹⁶¹ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 118

¹⁶² Parente, 2011, pp. 267-68

¹⁶³ Capobianco, 2006, p. 100

¹⁶⁴ Fernando, 2010, p. 638

¹⁶⁵ McCaffery, 1978, pp. 34-36

¹⁶⁶ D’Ascanio, 1994, p. 10

She did recover. Weeks later she went to thank Padre Pio. From afar she exclaimed: "That's him. That's exactly him." ^{167 168}

Andrea Bacile's rudeness to his family

Andrea Bacile from San Martino in Pensilis was frequently rude to his wife and children. One day, he was behaving particularly badly. He saw Padre Pio in front of him. He had seen in him in pictures, but never before in person. He was shocked. He asked to confess. Padre Pio said "No!", and then disappeared.

Andrea apologized to his wife and children and started a pilgrimage on foot to San Giovanni Rotondo. He walked for three days without resting or eating. When he reached the convent, he confessed to Padre Pio. After the absolution Padre Pio said: "Now, go and eat something." ¹⁶⁹

Slapping Maria Pompilio's brother in bilocation

Maria Pompilio, a spiritual daughter who lived near the convent testified that one evening she was praying when she began to doze off. Someone slapped her on the right cheek. The hand seemed to be that of Padre Pio. The day after, she asked Padre Pio if he had slapped her. Padre Pio: "That's what happens when you doze off while you are praying." ¹⁷⁰

Savino Greco's tumors

Savino Greco from Cerignola had a brain tumor and another tumor in the back of his right eye. He went to a specialist in Bari and the diagnosis was confirmed. He was transferred to Milan for surgery. He had a dream of Padre Pio who told him: "With time you will be cured." When the time came to operate, he was so scared that he ran away from the hospital. He went to stay with a cousin in Milan.

After a few days the pain was so intense that he decided he had no choice but to undergo surgery. Back in the hospital the surgeon performed a pre-operative examination with the other doctors. During the examination Savino smelled an intense fragrance of violets, roses, and lilies. When the doctors finished the examination, they were completely amazed. There was no trace of any tumor. They said he could go home. ¹⁷¹

Bilocation at the Judgment of Maria Pompilio's brother

Maria Pompilio wrote in her *Memorie di Padre Pio* that when her brother died, she asked Padre Pio to intercede so that her brother would be able to visit her in her dreams.

Soon after, her brother appeared in a dream and said: "Padre Pio assisted me in my agony. He stayed until the Judge judged me. I was given eleven years of Purgatory, but through the intercession of Padre Pio, the pain was reduced to one year. Many mysteries in the life of Padre Pio will be known only in the other world."

The morning after Maria went to see Padre Pio. From afar he said: "Are you glad now?" "Yes, it seems that you are everywhere." Padre Pio replied: "What use is it for me to be on the earth if I can't go up and down. I know. Your brother told you that the mystery of my life will be known only in Paradise."

¹⁶⁷ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 136-137

¹⁶⁸ Del Fante, 1950, pp. 471-472

¹⁶⁹ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 49-50

¹⁷⁰ Covino, 2007, p. 34

¹⁷¹ Gaudiose, 1974, pp. 119-120

Bilocation in Alençon (France) to Daniel Batonnier

On January 29th 1957 in Alençon (France) Daniel Batonnier was about to die of cerebrospinal meningitis. At 1:30 PM, his mother sent a telegram to Padre Pio. By 4:00 PM, the child had fully recovered. The doctors were puzzled.

On seeing a picture of Padre Pio, the child said: "Mom, I know that friar. He came to see me twice today. He was humming so as not to scare me, and then he left. Mom, when I grow up I want to be a friar like him."¹⁷²

Bilocation in Hungary to visit Cardinal Mindszenty in prison

In 1956 Padre Pio served the Mass for Cardinal Mindszenty while he was incarcerated in Budapest. The news spread. Padre Pio was asked: "Did you really talk to him, did you really see him?" "Certainly, if I have talked to him, I must have seen him."

On another occasion, he was asked: "Did you visit Cardinal Mindszenty while he was prisoner in Budapest in 1956?" "Yes. I have seen him and spoken to him."¹⁷³

Bilocation to honor Saint Therese of the Child Jesus

Saint Luigi Orione made this statement: "I saw Padre Pio in St. Peter's Basilica the day that Saint Therese of the Child Jesus was declared blessed. He came smiling towards me, walking through the crowds. He disappeared when we were a few feet away from each other." That happened on April 29th 1923.^{174 175 176 177}

Basilica of the Holy Spirit in Napoli

Padre Bonaventura was preaching in 1956 in the basilica of the Holy Spirit in Naples. Padre Pio appeared in the church for about 40 minutes. Everybody in the assembly saw him. Padre Bonaventura wrote to Padre Carmelo, superior at the convent, about it. Padre Carmelo thought of a hallucination, and asked Padre Pio: "Is Padre Bonaventura right?" Padre Pio answered: "Yes, it is true. It is true."¹⁷⁸

Bilocation in Bologna, Italy

A woman went to stay with her daughter and son-in-law in Bologna while waiting to have surgery for a malignant tumor in her arm. She was sitting alone in the living room when a Capuchin friar came through the door and said: "I am Padre Pio da Pietrelcina".

He exhorted her to have faith in the Madonna and blessed her arm. Then he said good-bye and left. The day after, she met with the doctor to go over the details of the surgical intervention. The surgeon examined the arm. There was no trace of the tumor.¹⁷⁹

Giacomo Cadice runs away from the Foreign Legion.

On October 24, 1949 the newspaper *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* reported this story:

Giacomo Cadice had run away from home. In time, his parents received a letter from Sidi-Bel-Abess in Algeria, where he stated that he had joined the Foreign Legion and would be remaining there for five years. His father Pietro went to Padre Pio asking for help. Padre Pio said: "Go and pray. By the third moon your son will return home!"

¹⁷² Chiron, 1999, pp. 270-271

¹⁷³ Allegri, 2000, pp. 131-133

¹⁷⁴ Winowska, 1988, p. 103

¹⁷⁵ Gallagher, 1995, p. 124

¹⁷⁶ De Liso, 1962, 92-93

¹⁷⁷ Napolitano, 1979, p. 185

¹⁷⁸ Schug, 1987, p. 6

¹⁷⁹ Viewed at: <https://www.padrepio.catholicwebservices.com/bilocazione.htm>

The next part of the story was told by the son himself. One night he was on guard at an advanced post, when he saw a friar gesturing with his hand that he follow him. They went across the desert for days, then embarked on a ship for Marseille in France, and the friar disappeared. From there Giacomo reached his home, joining his family. When Pietro showed his son a picture of Padre Pio, he immediately recognized the friar and started crying.^{180 181 182}

Giovanni Gigliozi's migraine

Giovanni Gigliozi was in a broadcasting studio in Rome and about to get on air when he had a terrible blinding attack of migraine. He knew that it would last for hours and he couldn't do a thing about it.

Suddenly he heard steps coming towards him. He opened his eyes and Padre Pio was there. He did not speak a word. He just gazed at him with an affectionate smile, laid his hand on his head, and disappeared. So too did the migraine.

Days later in the hallway of the convent, Padre Pio asked him: "Well, Giovanni how is the head? Ah! These hallucinations!"¹⁸³

Absolution in Northern Italy

Padre Alberto reported that one afternoon in May 1928, he approached Padre Pio who was standing at the window. His gaze was fixed and he was pronouncing the words of absolution in a very clear voice. Padre Alberto called Padre Tommaso, the superior, and both saw and heard Padre Pio concluding the absolution.

A few days later, a telegram came to Padre Tommaso from a city in Northern Italy thanking him for having sent Padre Pio to assist a dying man.^{184 185}

Bilocation to a meeting of spiritual children near the convent

Padre Carmelo, superior of the convent, decided to have meetings with the group of Padre Pio's early spiritual daughters, at the Ventrella's house in order to gather first-hand information about the beginning of Padre Pio's ministry in San Giovanni Rotondo.

The meetings were held on December 14th 1954, on January 10th and 25th 1955, and at later dates. Ten spiritual daughters were present: the Ventrella sisters, the Pompilio sisters, Filomena Fini, Rosinella Gisolfi in Placentino, Rachele Russo, Rachelina Gisolfi and Nina Campanile.

Padre Carmelo testified: "During the first meeting, Rachelina Gisolfi told everybody that Padre Pio was present. Back at the convent, I didn't have the courage to ask Padre Pio about it. During the second meeting Rachelina once again said that Padre Pio was there. Back at the convent I took courage and asked him.

Padre Pio's answer: "Why? Don't you want me there? Don't you want me to come to those meetings?"

After the third meeting and back at the convent, Padre Carmelo got this answer: "Yes, I was there." After another meeting Padre Pio asked Padre Carmelo: "How come you don't ask me anymore if I came to the meeting?"¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁰ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 92-93

¹⁸¹ Del Fante, 1950, pp. 160-163

¹⁸² Gaudiose, 1974, p. 111

¹⁸³ McCaffery, 1978, pp. 26-28

¹⁸⁴ Schug, 1987, p. 49

¹⁸⁵ Alberto, 2007, pp. 94-95

¹⁸⁶ Viewed at: <https://www.ewtn.com/padrepio/mystic/bilocation.htm>

Bilocation to visit an invalid sick man in town

In 1953 Padre Pio was sitting with other monks at a performance in the hall of the friary. Padre Carmelo, the Superior, was sitting by him. He reported that during the intermission, Padre Pio, "placed his arms on the back of the chair in front of him and rested his head on them, remaining silent and motionless for a few minutes".

The next day, Padre Carmelo went to visit an invalid sick man in town and was amazed when the man and his family expressed their appreciation for permitting Padre Pio to visit the man the previous evening. Padre Carmelo asked about the time and the duration of the visit. They matched perfectly with the intermission.¹⁸⁷

Bilocation to Heaven for Ettore Masone

Ettore Masone was Padre Pio's only nephew. He was not yet thirty when he became gravely ill, fell into a coma, and appeared to have died. The family made arrangements for a funeral the next day. But all of a sudden, he woke up and shouted: "I'm not dying anymore."

He recovered completely and instantly. He recalled: "I was at the gates of heaven and saw my sister Giuseppina who died many years ago standing there at the door. Then I also saw Padre Pio. Neither of them would let me in." That's when he woke up.¹⁸⁸

Bilocation during a delivery

In 1952, a woman was about to die during delivery because of an erroneous blood transfusion. She received the Last Rites. When the priest left, she saw a monk. "I am Padre Pio and you will not die. Say an *Our Father*. One day you will come to see me."

About a year later she went to see Padre Pio. He told her: "You received the miracle because the Sacred Heart sent me to save you since you are devoted to him and because you did the First Fridays of each month."¹⁸⁹

Visiting a paralyzed man from Maglie

The father of a Capuchin friar from Maglie (Lecce) lay in bed, paralyzed with a spinal disorder. The friar asked Padre Pio to pray for him. One afternoon the sick man saw a bearded friar at his bedside. The friar gently told him: "Suffer, suffer with patience". The following day the same thing happened, and the man was not improving. The afternoon visitations continued.

On the tenth day, the visiting friar said: "Enough is enough." From then on, the man started rapidly improving. A few days later, he was able to go back to farming. The farmer explained to his Capuchin son what had happened, and he recognized Padre Pio in a picture shown to him.¹⁹⁰

Monsignor D'Indico and his sister in Florence

The sister of Mons. Luigi D'Indico, the pastor of St. Joseph in the Santa Croce neighborhood of Florence, Italy, was in a comatose state suffering from paratyphoid A and B. The family prayed to Padre Pio.

On July 20th 1921 at 2:30 PM, Mons. D'Indico was working in his office. He felt that somebody was behind him. He turned and saw a friar walking and leaving the room. He asked his secretary who the friar was.

The secretary thought that monsignor was under stress because his sister was close to death, and that he was having hallucinations.

¹⁸⁷ Ruffin, 1991, p. 325

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 271

¹⁸⁹ Viewed at: <https://p-pio.myblog.it/2014/08/14/miracolo-padre-pio-signora-salvata/>

¹⁹⁰ Cataneo, 1991, p. 100

At the same hour, Mons. D'Indico's sister saw Padre Pio at her bedside. He told her: "Do not worry, tomorrow the fever will disappear, and in a few days there will be no trace of the illness in your body." She got better rapidly, and in few days was completely healed. ^{191 192 193 194}

Candy

A woman went to Padre Pio's Mass, leaving her child at home. When she returned, the daughter was eating a candy. The mom asked where she got the candy. The child pointed at a picture of Padre Pio. Later, after the confession, Padre Pio said to the woman: "Did you want a candy too?"¹⁹⁵

Tickling the feet of a dying child

The only child of Antonio Massa of San Giovanni Rotondo was gravely ill, and his parents and relatives took turns taking care of him. One evening he suddenly started laughing and told his mom: "Mommy, Mommy, Padre Pio tickled my feet." He had fully recovered. ¹⁹⁶

Extending the length of Padre Michelangelo's grandmother's life in bilocation

Padre Michelangelo Bellini reported that his grandma was over eighty years old and in a coma when he prayed Padre Pio that she could live long enough to see him celebrate his first Mass.

By the morning she had made an extraordinary recovery and told him that she had dreamed that a monk had brought her ten more years of life. She lived for exactly ten more years.

The sanctuary of Loreto

According to tradition, in Loreto there is a house in which Mary lived. It was reported several times that Padre Pio had been seen praying there in the evening.

One day Fra Daniele Natale took courage and asked: "Padre, have you ever been to Loreto?" "No." "But people have seen you there!" "Oh! That is something different."¹⁹⁷

Bilocation in Uruguay for Mons. Fernando Damiani

In 1937, Mons. Fernando Damiani, General Vicar of Salto, Uruguay had a heart attack that lasted for two hours while he was visiting Padre Pio in San Giovanni Rotondo. Padre Pio was called. He was confessing, and went to see Mons. Damiani after the acute phase had subsided. He told him: "I knew that you wouldn't die, that's why I continued the confessions." Damiani recovered and before returning to Uruguay he asked Padre Pio to be helped in his final moments.

In September 1941, a Congress for Vocations was held in Salto with several bishops - including Archbishop Antonio Maria Barbieri of Montevideo - participating. They were guests at the residence of Mons. Alfredo Viola, Bishop of Salto.

Mons. Damiani had another heart attack on September 11th a little after midnight. Mons. Barbieri heard a knocking at the door. The door opened, and a voice said: "Go and help Mons. Damiani who is dying."

Mons. Barbieri ran to Mons. Damiani's room. Mons. Damiani asked for the last rites. Four bishops and six priests were present for the extreme unction. A doctor visited the patient and said there was nothing he could do. Mons. Damiani died peacefully about thirty minutes after receiving the last rites. Beside him on the nightstand, there was a draft of a telegram written with shaking hands:

¹⁹¹ Ruffin, 1991, p. 203

¹⁹² Del Fante, 1950, pp. 474-475

¹⁹³ De Liso, 1962, pp. 86-7

¹⁹⁴ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 105-106

¹⁹⁵ D'Ascanio, 1994, p. 34

¹⁹⁶ Capobianco, 2006, pp. 280-281

¹⁹⁷ Viewed at: <http://www.padreguglielmo.it/new/padre-pio-in-santa-casa/>

“Padre Pio San Giovanni Rotondo – Continuous chest pains are wiping me out.” ^{198 199 200 201 202 203 204 205 206}

Mons. Viola went to San Giovanni Rotondo several times after Mons. Damiani’s death. He wrote an account of the event, and gave it to the convent.

In 1949, Mons. Barbieri talked to Padre Pio about the event. Padre Pio tried to dodge the questions and said smiling: “If you understood, let us not talk about it. How much more do you want to know?” ^{207 208}

In 1958, Mons. Viola presented a written sworn description on the events to the friary.

Mons. Barbieri asked Padre Pio to assist him on his deathbed. Padre Pio: “I will die before you will, but I’ll assist you from heaven.” Barbieri survived Padre Pio by eleven years. ²⁰⁹

Bilocation in Uruguay for Mother Teresa Salvadores

In Montevideo, Uruguay during November 1921, Mother Teresa Salvadores was dying from cancer of the stomach and a lesion of the aorta. While he was in San Giovanni Rotondo, Monsignor Damiani, had obtained one of Padre Pio’s gloves. Damiani applied the glove to her stomach and to her throat. She fell asleep, and when she awoke she was cured. She reported that while asleep, Padre Pio had touched her side “in the place where it hurt,” then breathed on her “and spoke of such things that were not of this earth.” ^{210 211 212 213}

Bilocation to the home of Dr. Andrea Cardone in Pietrelcina

Dr. Andrea Cardone made a written statement soon after Padre Pio’s death: “I, the undersigned, Dr. Andrea Cardone, declare that I had a conversation with Padre Pio on two occasions in my home in Pietrelcina. The first was on February 18th 1965, at 9:00 AM, the second on September 23rd 1968, at 6:00 AM. On both occasions Padre Pio was present in his mortal flesh, and our conversation lasted several minutes.” ²¹⁴

Dr. Cardone was Padre Pio’s physician when he lived in Pietrelcina.

A coward in Rome

A young man in Rome was ashamed of his normal custom of tipping his hat when passing in front of a Catholic church. He was afraid that his friends would make fun of him. But on one particular

¹⁹⁸ Agostino, 2012, p. 212 (Note)

¹⁹⁹ Winowska, 1988, pp. 100-101

²⁰⁰ Alessandro, 2011, pp. 207-211

²⁰¹ McCaffery, 1978, pp. 33-34

²⁰² Ruffin, 1991, pp. 243-245

²⁰³ Capuano, 2012, pp. 251-252

²⁰⁴ Del Fante, 1950, pp. 485-487

²⁰⁵ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 110-111

²⁰⁶ Napolitano, 1979, p. 185

²⁰⁷ Agostino, 2012, p. 210 (notes 210-212)

²⁰⁸ Capobianco, 2006, pp. 130-131

²⁰⁹ Ruffin, 1991, p. 245

²¹⁰ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 129-130

²¹¹ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 199-201

²¹² Del Fante 1950, pp. 350-351

²¹³ Napolitano, 1979, p. 149

²¹⁴ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 90

occasion, he heard Padre Pio's voice in his ear saying: "Coward." Later on, he met Padre Pio in person. Padre Pio said to him: "Next time it will be a loudspeaker in the ear!" ^{215 216 217}

Padre Pio visiting Rev. John Esseff in bilocation at the home of Mary Pyle

Father John Esseff, from Scranton, Pennsylvania made his first trip to Europe in May of 1959. He was accompanied by his friend Father Bob Calligan.

After visiting Rome, they wanted to see Padre Pio but were told it was difficult to approach him. They were instructed to go to San Giovanni Rotondo and then ask for a woman by the name of Mary Pyle, "because she might get us to see him."

They made the journey, "and Mary Pyle invited us to go to her cottage and have something to eat. She put on the table some wine, some bread, and some cheese for us. While those simple hospitalities were taking shape, I saw Padre Pio come into the cottage and say to me: 'What are you doing her? Are you a curiosity seeker?'"

"I was completely surprised! But I answered him what I had been thinking. We talked about Jesus and the Blessed Sacrament. There was no talk of wounds. We talked for about twenty minutes, and then he left. I turned to Mary Pyle and I asked her: 'Does he come here often?'"

"Her reply was strange", concluded Rev. Esseff. Mary Pyle said: "We didn't know that he was here. If he had a conversation with you, he came to see you. No one else at the table saw him here. He does that frequently. He has the gift of bilocation." ²¹⁸

Bilocation to Manoppello on the last day of his life

Padre Domenico Petracca da Cesa Manoppello, a Capuchin friar who had been a friend of Padre Pio since 1940 reported that early in the morning of September 22nd 1968 he went to open the church at Manoppello, located more than 200 kilometers north of San Giovanni Rotondo in the province of Abruzzi.

Inside the church he found Padre Pio on his knees in the first row pew, his head in his hands, before the image known as the Holy Face.

Padre Pio said to him: "I do not trust myself any more. Pray for me. Goodbye until we meet again in Paradise."

Padre Pio died a few hours later. ²¹⁹

Last known bilocation while Padre Pio was alive, to Padre Umile in Genova

Padre Umile, friend of Padre Pio was bedridden in Genova because of a fall. On September 22nd 1968 at 4:30 PM Sister Ludovica brought a cup of tea to Padre Umile.

On entering the room, she smelled an intense perfume of flowers. Padre Umile said to her: "Padre Pio came to say his last last goodbye." A few hours later Padre Pio died. ²²⁰

²¹⁵ Winkowska, 1988, pp. 49-50

²¹⁶ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 162

²¹⁷ Ibid., p. 163

²¹⁸ Esseff & Esseff, 2010, pp. 141-144

²¹⁹ Viewed at: illuminadomine.com/2017/09/05/servant-of-god-domenico-da-cese-st-padre-pio-and-the-holy-face/

²²⁰ Viewed at: <http://xn--cristianit-q4a.it/ultima-bilocazione-di-padre-pio/>

Padre Pio driving cars in an emergency in bilocation

Padre Pio driving for Paris De Nunzio

Paris De Nunzio from Pietrelcina went to visit Padre Pio by car with a friend who fell asleep at the wheel. While the car was swerving uncontrollably, Paris cried: "Padre Pio help us."

The friend woke up and regained control of the car. At the convent, Padre Pio: "Well, you all arrived safe. I was driving the car."²²¹

Padre Pio driving for Enrico Medi

Professor Enrico Medi reports that while he was driving the narrow road to San Giovanni, he began to think about his daughter's birthday and that she would be blowing out the candles at about that time.

He missed a bend on the road, and was about to crash in an incoming car. But the cars stopped a few inches from each other.

That afternoon, when Padre Pio saw him, he said: "You blow out the candles, and I drive the car."²²²

²²¹ Viewed at: <https://padrepiodevotions.org/pray-hope-and-dont-worry-issue-28-july-september-2006/>

²²² D'Ascanio, 1994. pp. 96-97

3 Healings: How do they happen? God's interventions beyond the humanly thinkable

Pasquale Di Chiara walks: The very first healing reported in a newspaper

Pasquale Di Chiara had been forced to use a cane to walk for several months after a fall. Padre Pio seeing him commanded him to walk. Pasquale reported: "I felt a burning sensation from my foot through my body. I began walking perfectly without assistance." The healing was reported by *Il Mattino* on November 6th 1919.^{223 224 225}

Italia Di Chiara walks

Pasquale's daughter Italia Di Chiara had been using braces on her legs as a result of contracting infantile paralysis during her infancy. Padre Pio asked her to take them off. She was able to walk and move around, and never needed to use them again.²²⁶

To Francesco Viscio Santarello: "Throw away your crutches."

Francesco Visco lived near the convent. He had walked on crutches all his life because of a deformity from infantile paralysis (polio) contracted soon after his birth. He dragged himself about on his knees, supported by a pair of miniature crutches. The children would make fun of him all the time. He was usually positioned near the door of the cloister, soliciting alms.

When he was 43 years old, he took the courage to approach Padre Pio and ask: "Padre Pio bless me." Many people, including Padre Paolino da Casacalenda witnessed the happening.

Padre Pio promptly answered: "Throw away your crutches." Francesco was stunned and didn't move. This time Padre Pio shouted: "I said, throw away your crutches." In front of all those assembled there, Francesco threw his crutches away. He walked for the first time, and continued to walk freely until the time of his death several years later.^{227 228}

To Pasquale Urbano: "Get up and go. Throw away those canes".

Pasquale Urbano of Foggia had been walking with two canes since falling from a carriage. After confessing to Padre Pio in 1919, Padre Pio said to him: "Get up and go. Throw away those canes". To everyone's amazement, he put down his canes and walked away.^{229 230}

To Giuseppe Canaponi: "I only prayed for you. The Lord healed you."

On May 21st 1945, Giuseppe Canaponi of Firenze was hit by a truck while driving his motorcycle. He suffered multiple fractures from his skull to his feet, including five fractures of the left femur, which required multiple surgeries. He had been walking on crutches ever since. In 1948 he confessed with Padre Pio. At the end of the confession, he walked away

²²³ Malatesta, 2002, pp. 94-98

²²⁴ Capuano, 2012, p. 218

²²⁵ Napolitano, 1979, p. 144

²²⁶ Malatesta, 2002, pp. 96-97

²²⁷ Ibid., p. 99

²²⁸ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 117-119

²²⁹ Prezioso, 2000, p. 196

²³⁰ Napolitano, 1979, p. 144

normally, without realizing it. He went back to thank Padre Pio. Padre Pio said to him: "I didn't perform the miracle. I only prayed for you. The Lord healed you." ^{231 232 233}

Daria

One memorable episode occurred just before the time of Padre Pio's ordination. While in Montefusco in 1908, he gathered some chestnuts growing in a nearby forest, placed them into a bag and sent them on to his aunt Daria in Pietrelcina. She had always felt great affection for him. Aunt Daria received and ate the chestnuts, and saved the bag as a souvenir.

A few days later she was looking for something in a drawer where her husband usually kept his gun powder. It was in the evening so she used a candle to light up the room in order to see what she was doing. The gun powder in the drawer suddenly ignited, and aunt Daria's face and hair were severely burned. She had the presence of mind to find the bag that Padre Pio had sent, and placed it over her face. The pain immediately disappeared and no wound or hair loss or burn mark were anywhere to be seen on her face. ²³⁴

The Savino family: Lina and Giuseppe in a coma; Giovanni's face blasted. Padre Pio: "If you only knew what this cost me!"

Rosa Di Cosimo and Giovanni Savino met Padre Pio six weeks after their wedding, and became his spiritual children. Giovanni became a construction worker at the friary. They had eight children.

Their daughter Lina was struck one day by a Moped, a light motorized bicycle. At the first aid station, the doctor diagnosed head trauma and severe internal hemorrhage. She was in a coma and there was no hospital nearby. Her mother ran to Padre Pio. Padre Pio "looked towards heaven as if he was viewing another reality." He said, "Let's pray and we'll leave everything in Our Lord's hands." Three days later, Lina opened her eyes, and recovered quickly and completely.

A few years later, Giovanni's son Giuseppe was hit by a motorcycle. He suffered head injuries and was in a deep coma. Padre Pio prayed for him. He returned to consciousness soon after and recovered quickly.

Giovanni went to Padre Pio's Mass every morning and received his blessing before going to work. On February 12th 1949, Padre Pio told him: "Giovanni, I'm praying to the Lord that you might not be killed." Padre Pio repeated the same thing over the next three days." Giovanni was anxious, and asked for an explanation, but Padre Pio remained silent.

On February 15th, Giovanni told his crew "Let's not work today." But they refused. They had to blast away some rocks in preparation for the friary annex. Giovanni placed a charge of dynamite under a boulder and lit the fuse. It failed to detonate. After a few minutes Giovanni went over to check the charge. As he bent over, the dynamite exploded in his face. The face was severely damaged. The right eye was an empty socket. The left eye had numerous foreign bodies in it.

Padre Pio exposed the Blessed Sacrament and was heard to pray: "Lord, I offer You one of my eyes for Giovanni, because he is the father of a family."

On February 25th, Giovanni smelled the "aroma of paradise" and felt that Padre Pio was near him. He felt three slaps on his forehead. Giovanni said: "Padre Pio give me my sight or let me die. I cannot live like this.

²³¹ Ingoldsby, 1978, pp. 93-94

²³² Cataneo, 1991, pp. 114-115

²³³ Covino, 2007, pp. 247-249

²³⁴ Ruffin, 1991, p. 66

Later that morning, the ophthalmologist, who was an atheist, came to examine Giovanni. Giovanni exclaimed: "Doctor, I see you with my right eye. The doctor: "You might see me with the left eye. The right is completely destroyed." Upon further examination, the doctor had to admit that Giovanni was right, and that he could in fact see, even when his left eye was covered. He said: "Now I too believe because this has happened right in front of me."

Giovanni was released from the hospital in June 1949 and visited Padre Pio. Padre Pio said to him: "If you only knew what this cost me!" Giovanni continued to see perfectly well from his empty right eye socket until his death in 1979.^{235 236 237 238}

Lello Pegna is totally blind

In 1919, a priest named Padre Carlo Naldi went to see Padre Pio with his Jewish friend, Lello Pegna. The priest explained that Pegna had recently become totally blind. They had come to Padre Pio to see if he could be healed.

Padre Pio told Pegna: "The Lord will not grant you the grace of physical sight unless you first receive sight for your soul. After you are baptized, then the Lord will give you your sight."

Months later, Pegna came back without the dark glasses that he normally wore. Pegna explained to Padre Pio that, despite opposition from his family, he had become a Christian and was baptized. He was discouraged initially because his blindness continued, but after a number of months his eyesight returned.

The physician who had earlier told Pegna that he was hopelessly blind now had to admit that his eyesight was in perfect condition.

Padre Paolino kept in contact with Lello Pegna for nearly thirty years, and reported that his vision remained perfect.^{239 240}

"Only from one eye? Never put limitations on God. Always ask for the big grace!"

A blind man from Lecco begged Padre Pio to restore his sight "even if only in one eye," so that he might again see the faces of his dear ones. Padre Pio questioned him repeatedly: "Only in one eye?"

Padre Pio told the man to be of good heart and that he would pray for him. Some weeks later the man returned in tears to thank Padre Pio because his sight was restored!

Padre Pio said: "So, you are seeing normally again?" The man replied, "Yes, from this eye here, not from the other."

Padre Pio said: "Ah! Only from one eye? Let that be a lesson to you. Never put limitations on God. Always ask for the big grace!"²⁴¹

Grazia Siena born blind

Grazia Siena from San Giovanni Rotondo was born blind. She often went to the convent to pray. When she was 29, Padre Pio suggested that she have an operation on the eyes. With the help of her family and friends, she visited many eye doctors, but no one was willing to perform surgery.

²³⁵ Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 227-228

²³⁶ Schug, 1987, pp. 42-44

²³⁷ Prezioso, 2000, pp. 196-197

²³⁸ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 330-333

²³⁹ Malatesta, 2002, pp. 100-101

²⁴⁰ Castelli, 2011, p. 163

²⁴¹ McCaffery, 1978, pp. 70-71

They finally convinced Prof. Francesco Durante of Bari to operate. However, he told Graziella that only a miracle could give her sight back. When the bandages were removed after surgery she was able to see for the first time.^{242 243}

Gemma di Giorgi is able to see. She has no pupils.

Gemma di Giorgi from Ribera in Sicily was born on Christmas day in 1939. She was blind from birth, having been born without pupils. Three eye specialists, Drs. Bonifacio, Cucco, and Contini had determined that she was inoperable, and that nothing could be done about her blindness.

In 1947 she was brought to Padre Pio by her grandmother. In the hallway, after confession Padre Pio touched her on both eyes, making the sign of the cross over each of them. The same day she received her first communion from Padre Pio. He told her: "Be good and saintly." She began to see normally, even though her eyes remained without pupils.^{244 245}

^{246 247}

She was taken to several eye specialists for further evaluation, and they all declared that she could not possibly see, repeating over and over "Without pupils, one cannot see. Over the years, many doctors examined Gemma and were amazed by the fact that her vision was normal.

Gemma and her grandmother spent some days in San Giovanni Rotondo in 1967, and detailed her story to Clarice Bruno. Gemma was 28 years old at the time."²⁴⁸

"I had no pupils in my eyes," said Gemma in an interview with Father John Schug in 1971, several years after Padre Pio's death. "I had no sight at all. Today I still see normally. As you can see I have no pupils."²⁴⁹

To Maria Gennai: "Why are you crying so loud? Can't you see that your child is sleeping?"

In May 1925, Maria Gennai, the mother of a few-months old infant who was very unwell was told by the doctors that there was nothing else to be done to save him. Out of desperation and faith, she hurriedly wrapped the child in some clothes, took her fiber suitcase, and jumped on a train to visit Padre Pio. The child stopped breathing and turned blue during the trip. She put the child in the suitcase and continued on her way.

When she was in front of Padre Pio she started crying pitifully, and opened the suitcase. Padre Pio appeared moved. He put his hand on the child's head and prayed silently. Then he said to Maria: "Why are you crying so loudly? Can't you see that your child is sleeping?" As though waking up from a long sleep, the child began to move and returned to life.^{250 251}

To the husband and children of Paolina Preziosi: "She will resurrect on Easter Sunday."

Paolina Preziosi, a mother of five from San Giovanni Rotondo who was known to Padre Pio as a special soul, fell gravely ill before Easter.

²⁴² De Liso, 1962, pp. 120-121

²⁴³ Napolitano, 1979, pp. 147-148

²⁴⁴ Winowska, 1988, p. 129

²⁴⁵ Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 160-161

²⁴⁶ Bruno, 1970, pp. 111-116

²⁴⁷ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 111-114

²⁴⁸ Bruno, 1970, pp. 111-116

²⁴⁹ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 333-334

²⁵⁰ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 110-111

²⁵¹ Malatesta, 1999, pp. 182-183

The doctors said there was nothing that they could do to save her. The husband and children went to Padre Pio to implore his help.

He said: "She will resurrect on Easter Sunday".

On Good Friday she lost consciousness. On the morning of Holy Saturday, she went into a coma.

The relatives went again to Padre Pio. He said: "She will resurrect."

She died late Saturday evening. The family made the preparations for her body to be dressed in her wedding gown as was customary in the area.

Padre Pio started the Easter Vigil Mass and at the moment of the *Gloria*, he began to weep when the bells started ringing and the organ was resounding. At the same time, Paolina lifted herself unaided, kneeled beside the bed, and started to recite the *Credo* aloud.

Everybody was astonished. They asked her what had happened. She said: "I was climbing and climbing happily. When I was about to enter into a great light, I turned around and started to come back."

Padre Pio had not said "She will recover" but "She will resurrect."^{252 253 254 255 256 257}

To Lucietta Pennelli: "Here is the dead one, who came back to life."

In 1967, Lucietta Pennelli of San Giovanni Rotondo who was six years of age was dying from meningitis. The doctor said to her father: "I'm sorry, but there is nothing we can do." Lucietta had been in a coma for several days. One night, her mother Rachele saw Padre Pio enter the room. He approached the bed, held the hand of the dying girl, and then left after looking at the mother, Rachele. No word was said. At 4:00 AM the girl woke up, opened her eyes, and said: "I'm thirsty." Alfonso, her father went straight to Padre Pio to tell him that Lucietta was out of a coma. Padre Pio: "Let's thank the Virgin."

Lucietta improved steadily and went to the convent with her uncle. Padre Pio: "Here is the little body that came back to life." Then he caressed her and said: "Do you know why you didn't die? Because the reaper didn't make it on time! Our Lady arrived before him!" From then on, whenever Padre Pio saw her, he would to say: "Here is the dead one who came back to life."²⁵⁸

Erminio Ziaco had muscular dystrophy

Erminio Ziaco of Civitavecchia was afflicted with muscular dystrophy. The pediatrician and a specialist in Rome said there was no cure. The child was taken to Padre Pio. Soon after, he began to walk, run, and ride a bicycle. When he returned to the pediatrician, the doctor described Erminio's recovery as an "immense surprise."²⁵⁹

Letters from Rev. Karol Wojtyla about Dr. Wanda Poltawska from Cracow

From 1941 to 1945, Dr. Wanda Poltawska, from Cracow in Poland was in the Ravensbruck concentration camp. After liberation she married and had four daughters. She was friendly with the archbishop Karol Wojtyla. In 1962 she was diagnosed with advanced stomach cancer. The doctors said that she might live for a few more months if they performed surgery. She spoke of her circumstances to the archbishop Wojtyla who was preparing to

²⁵² Morcaldi, 2013, p. 162

²⁵³ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 123-125

²⁵⁴ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 202-203

²⁵⁵ Del Fante, 1950, pp. 352-354

²⁵⁶ De Liso, 1962, pp. 97-98

²⁵⁷ Napolitano, 1979, p. 141

²⁵⁸ Iasenzaniro, 2007, pp. 662-664

²⁵⁹ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 94

leave for the opening of the Ecumenical Council in Rome. On November 18, 1962, Wojtyla wrote to Padre Pio, asking that he pray for Dr. Poltawska:

"Venerable Father, I ask You to pray for a mother of four girls who is forty years old, from Cracow in Poland. (During the last war she was in a concentration camp in Germany). Now her health and her life are in extreme danger because of cancer: May God have mercy on her and her family, and may she receive the intercession of the Very Blessed Virgin.

Very much obliged in Christ, + Carol Wojtyla, Titular Bishop of Ombi, Capitular Vicar of Cracow in Poland. Roma,

Pontifical Polish College, Piazza Remuria 2A, Roma."

Angelo Battisti, the administrator of Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza, reported that Padre Pio told him: "*Angelino, conserva questa lettera, perche' un giorno diventera' importante*". "Angelino, keep this letter safe, because one day it will become important." ²⁶⁰

At the final pre-operative check on Friday November 21st, the surgeon could find no trace of the tumor. It had simply disappeared. On Saturday morning, the archbishop Wojtyla called from Rome to ask about the surgery. Dr. Poltawska told him "the good news".

Mons. Wojtyla wrote another letter to Padre Pio on November 28th, thanking him for his prayers, stating: "She recovered fully before the surgery was started":

"Venerable Father, the woman living in Cracow, Poland, mother of four girls, regained her health immediately before surgery on November 21st. Thanks be to God. And also to you, Venerable Father, the biggest thank you from the woman, her husband, and the entire family.

In Christ. + Karol Wojtyla, Capitular Vicar of Cracow
Roma, November 28, 1962."

This is a follow up letter to Padre Pio from the future John Paul II, sent from Rome on December 14, 1963:

"Very Reverend Father, Your Paternity will certainly remember that I have several times in the past recommended to your prayers some particularly extreme cases in need of attention. I would like therefore to thank you deeply on behalf of the people involved, particularly on behalf of a woman, a catholic physician who had been ill with cancer, and the son of an attorney who had been gravely ill since birth. Both these persons are now doing well, thanks be to God.

Allow me moreover, Very Reverend Father, to entrust to your prayers a paralyzed woman of this Archdiocese. I also take the opportunity to recommend to you the vast pastoral difficulties that I am confronted with at present. I take the opportunity to reiterate to you the depth of the religious regard in which I remain and wish to affirm to Your Paternity very devout in Jesus Christ.

+ Karol WOJTYLA, titular bishop of Ombi, Capitular Vicar of Cracow."

The letters are kept in the archives of the friary. ²⁶¹

In 1967 Dr. Poltawska met Padre Pio: "He was passing by me on his way to the sacristy. He suddenly stopped and searched the crowd with his eyes. Then he turned and walked towards me. With his hand on my head he said: "Are you all right now, my dear child? Is it OK now?" At that instant I just knew in my heart that he had indeed obtained my cure." ²⁶²

²⁶⁰ Capuano, 2012, pp. 233-234

²⁶¹ Pio12, 234

²⁶² Gallagher, 1995, pp. 178-183

Enrico Del Fante's tuberculosis

Alberto Del Fante was a journalist who despised Padre Pio. At a certain point, Del Fante's grandson, Enrico, was struck with kidney disease and tuberculosis. The doctors gave little hope that Enrico would recover. Relatives of Enrico traveled to see Padre Pio and asked him to pray for the child. Padre Pio assured them that the boy would recover.

Del Fante himself said: "If Enrico gets well, I will make a pilgrimage to San Giovanni Rotondo myself." He was convinced that nothing would happen, but the boy was healed. Del Fante was deeply moved and went to see Padre Pio who helped him turn to God. After Del Fante's conversion, he became a dedicated promoter of Padre Pio.²⁶³

Padre Costantino's tuberculosis

In 1935 Padre Costantino Capobianco told Padre Pio that he had a relapse of tuberculosis, and had been ordered to report to a sanitarium. Padre Pio: "Don't worry. This is just an excursion." Padre Costantino was soon discharged, and outlived Padre Pio.²⁶⁴

To Brother Elia De Martino with tuberculosis: You have got a long way to go my son!"

In 1937, Brother Elia De Martino da Serracapriola was a theology student in Campobasso. He contracted tuberculosis. After three years the Father Superior thought that he was not long of this world and sent him to the convent of San Giovanni Rotondo.

Elia told Padre Pio: "Everybody says that I am done for, that I have to die soon." Padre Pio: "Who has to die?" "Me. I have tuberculosis." "And you have to die? You have a long way to go yet my son!"

Elia De Martino was ordained a Capuchin priest in 1941, and died in San Giovanni Rotondo in 2003, at the age of 87.²⁶⁵

Rosetta Polo Riva's congenital heart malformation

Rosetta Polo Riva from Bolzaneto was twelve years old and had a painful congenital heart defect. Her friend wrote a letter to Padre Pio, asking prayers for Rosetta. Two weeks later Rosetta saw Padre Pio at her bedside. "Rosetta, I am Padre Pio. Instead of writing you a letter I came in person. You will receive the grace of Our Lady on August 28th at eight in the evening." On that date, she began to feel better, and few days later she was completely cured.²⁶⁶

Leonello Marinelli's son has a heart condition

On February 1950 the 15-year-old son of Leonello Marinelli from Montignana near Perugia was diagnosed with an incapacitating disorder of the heart. The specialists said that it was beyond medical help.

The child asked the father to go tell Padre Pio. Lionello's father approached Padre Pio, and before he had even opened his mouth, Padre Pio said: "I know why you have come. The boy is better and gradually he will be completely cured." When Lionello went back home, the son told him that he had dreamed of Padre Pio, and was feeling better.

After examining the boy, the doctors affirmed that the heart disorder had disappeared, and declared that there was no way this could have happened naturally. Within a month, the young Marinelli was completely well, and was able to visit Padre Pio with his father.²⁶⁷

²⁶³ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 163

²⁶⁴ Ruffin, 1991, p. 242

²⁶⁵ Iasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 286-287

²⁶⁶ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 170

²⁶⁷ Ruffin, 1991, p. 335

Vincenzo Matera's kidney problems

Vincenzo Matera had been an inpatient at Casa Sollievo in 1976 for a kidney stone, and after six days of observation the doctors decided to operate. Vincenzo saw Padre Pio at his bedside. He told him: "Get up. You are healed." He got up. The fragmented stone was expelled. At the same time, he was called to his wife's room. She was also an inpatient at Casa Sollievo and had just delivered a healthy baby boy. Vincenzo did not need to undergo surgery.²⁶⁸

Don Orione send a paralyzed young man to Padre Pio

A young man with a deformed and paralysed right hand went to Don Luigi Orione (now canonized as a saint) asking that his hand be healed because he had a wife and children to provide for.

Don Orione suggested that he visit Padre Pio and tell him that he was there on don Orione's recommendation.

The man visited Padre Pio. He returned to don Orione a week later, smiling and waving his arm which was completely healed. He said that he had mentioned don Orione by name, and that Padre Pio had blessed his arm.²⁶⁹

Anna Clara Lacitignola paralyzed by polio

Anna Clara Lacitignola was a three-year-old child from Bari who was diagnosed with polio on January 8th 1947. She was paralyzed and couldn't move. The family spent their entire estate on consultations, injections, transfusions, and whatever else was suggested by the doctors. There was no improvement whatsoever.

After Easter that year, the child's grandmother went to Padre Pio. He said: 'Go home, go home, you will find your baby better. Take courage and pray to the Lord.'

Back home, Anna Clara began to improve rapidly. After a few days, she was completely healed and was "robust, healthy, very bright and very pious."²⁷⁰

Mr. Pasquini from San Francisco, has a nervous system's disorder

Frances Pasqualini from San Francisco, California, testified that in December 1951 her 29-year-old brother-in-law was stricken with "a rare illness on the nervous system" which left him paralyzed from the neck down. The doctors "gave no hope for his life." The family wrote to padre Pio, asking for his prayers.

Two months later she reported that "the same young man is now back home with his wife and children, eating by himself, learning to walk without a cane, and showing signs of a thorough and complete recovery."²⁷¹

Nicoletta Mazzone's coma from meningitis

In 1919, Nicoletta Mazzone, a child from San Felice a Cancelli had been in a coma for several months due to meningitis. The doctors had given up hope. Her father went to Padre Pio. Padre Pio said: "Go home and be happy, the Madonna of Graces will heal her."

Pietro, the father, thought that Padre Pio had not understood the gravity of the illness, and kept explaining what the doctors had told him. Padre Pio: "Man of little faith! I repeat, go home and be glad because the Madonna of Graces has healed her."

²⁶⁸ Covino, 2007, p. 239

²⁶⁹ Peroni, 2002, p. 355

²⁷⁰ Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 217-218

²⁷¹ Ruffin, 1991, 335-336

When he returned home, he found that his daughter had come out of the coma, was eating regularly, speaking, and feeling normal. Pietro stated that “the doctors were astonished, and said that the child had returned from the grave.”²⁷²

Paolo Sala has spinal meningitis

Dr. Giuseppe Sala sent a telegram to Padre Pio requesting that he pray for his son Paolo who was in a critical condition with spinal meningitis. Padre Pio wired back: “On the third day he will have no more fever and he will turn out to be the most intelligent of all your children.” The prophecy proved true.²⁷³

Paolo Perrone’s lung problems

Paolo Perrone from Sicily testified in 1993 that, after confession in 1948, he told Padre Pio that he had a constant pain in the shoulder and he thought it was pleurisy.

Padre Pio: “And do you want to live with this worrying thought my son? I have rotten lungs and yet I’m still living.”

After a pause he put his hand on the man’s shoulder. “Does it hurt now?” “No”. “There, have you seen now?” The penitent returned home cured.²⁷⁴

“My wife has a tumor”

A man bellowed in the hallway: “Padre, my wife has a tumor. I have a lot of children. You must cure her for us.” “Yes, all right, I will pray.” “No, Padre, you must cure her at once.”

Padre Pio said: “Don’t you know it is easier to cure a tumor than to change the heart of a man? Very well, it will mean a little tightening of the belt for the spiritual children. Here a headache, there a sore leg, a sacrifice for another, and we will offer it all up to the Lord for your wife’s recovery.”

The woman was cured by the time her husband had returned home.²⁷⁵

To Danilo Gorin: “Have faith, Jesus is doctor and medicine.”

Danilo Gorin testified in 1996 that he had returned to Italy from Canada because he had a terminal throat cancer. The doctors had told him: “Go to your homeland to die.”

Together with his wife, he went to see Padre Pio for the first time. As soon as Padre Pio saw him he said: “Eh, Canadian.” The poor man was so surprised that he started crying.

After the confession, Padre Pio asked: “So what do the doctors say about your illness?” After Danilo’s explanation that he had three months to live, Padre Pio touched his throat and said: “Have faith, Jesus is doctor and medicine.”

On his way to his hometown of Vicenza he realized that he felt normal. A doctor’s examination found him to be completely healthy.²⁷⁶

To Umberto Di Girolamo: “My son what have you had?”

Umberto Di Girolamo, a young fellow from Palermo testified in 1996 that he had been suffering from an intestinal infection with polyserositis, exudative peritonitis and pleurisy. He went to see Padre Pio in 1955. Padre Pio said: “Do you have any faith?” Umberto couldn’t utter a word. Padre Pio: “Well, if it’s like that, away with you.”

Later he went to confession. Padre Pio: “How long is it since last confession?” Again, no words. Padre Pio: “Away with you”.

²⁷² Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 219-221

²⁷³ Ruffin, 1991, p. 339

²⁷⁴ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 61

²⁷⁵ Duchess Suzanne, 1983, p. 125

²⁷⁶ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 62

After several tormented days he went to confession again. Padre Pio gave him the absolution, and then asked: "What have you had?" Umberto did not understand the subtlety of the question and said: "Must I offer my sufferings to Our Lady?" And Padre Pio: "But my son what have you had?" And then added: "Well, we all have the duty to take care of ourselves."

Back at the guesthouse, he felt normal and stopped taking all of his medications. In Palermo the doctors found him healed. He started to practice sports again.²⁷⁷

Angelo Salvitti from Forest Park, Ill., has bleeding colitis

Angelo Salvitti from Forest Park, Ill., had been suffering since 1945 from bleeding colitis. He has been hospitalized at the Hines Veteran's Hospital many times, and he bled from seven to thirty-five times every day. He heard about Padre Pio and decided to visit him.

In 1967, with his wife and sister and a recommendation to contact Nicolino Cocomozzi, they went to San Giovanni Rotondo. Nicolino was a longtime resident and worked at the post office. He went to the convent most days in order to get Padre Pio's signature on certified mail addressed to him. Nicolino took Angelo to Padre Pio's room: "Padre, this man has come from America to see you".

Padre Pio: "Bravo, bravo, God bless you my son." Angelo reported: "From that moment the burning pain I had for so many years disappeared completely and I have never had it again. And I did not ask for anything regarding my illness." The next morning Padre Pio told Nicolino: "Tell him he is well now, and to eat and drink anything he desires. I have already been praying for him for a long time."²⁷⁸

Maria Cozzi Giuliano's epithelioma of the tongue

Maria Cozzi Giuliano had epithelioma of the tongue. She had terrible pain for several months and was unable to chew any food. It was suggested that she pray to Padre Pio, and she did so. On August 18th 1919, she went to the dentist to have a number of teeth extracted before the operation. The dentist found that her tongue was completely healed and called in Dr. Marchetti for confirmation. Both stated that she was completely cured.^{279 280 281 282}

Amelia, mother of Pio Abresh

Amelia and Federico Abresh married in 1925. In 1926 Amelia had a miscarriage which was caused by a small tumor of the uterus. The tumor grew aggressively and the specialists advised her not to postpone surgery.

She went to Padre Pio. He said: "Follow the advice of the doctors." She replied "So, I will never have children?" "Well then, my daughter, no instruments. You would be ruined for the rest of your life."

She returned home and decided not to proceed with the surgery. Two years later, she gave birth to a boy. They named him Pio in honor of padre Pio. Pio Abresh became a priest.^{283 284 285}

²⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 62-65

²⁷⁸ Bruno, 1970, pp. 165-168

²⁷⁹ Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 161-162

²⁸⁰ De Liso, 1962, pp. 96-97

²⁸¹ Peroni, 2002, p. 358

²⁸² Allegri, 2000, pp. 374-377

²⁸³ Winkowska, 1988, pp. 51-52

²⁸⁴ Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 222-224

²⁸⁵ Del Fante, 1950, pp. 392-396

“Padre, if you pray, God can make a miracle.” “Do you believe what you say?” “Yes Padre, I do believe it.”

Graziano Borelli often went to San Giovanni Rotondo. He testified in 1999, reporting a conversation with Padre Pio:

“Padre, I have brought a 14-year-old boy who is ill with a lymph granuloma.” “And what can I do about it?” “Padre, if you pray, God can make a miracle.” “Do you believe what you say?” “Yes Padre, I do believe it.” Padre Pio remained silent for a while, then added: “So let it be.”

Back home, the doctors ran a number of tests over two days. The boy was completely cured, and is still living today.²⁸⁶

Iole Cassano had scarlet fever

Iole Cassano from San Giovanni Rotondo testified that in 1934, she became ill and had a high temperature during an epidemic of scarlet fever. Fearing the worst, her father went to Padre Pio. He said: “Don’t worry. Go home and you will see that the girl no longer has a fever.” “It was true” Iole reported.²⁸⁷

Padre Emanuele Grassi’s shoulder pain

Padre Emanuele Grassi da Riccia had pain in a shoulder. It had been bothering him for some time. He told Padre Pio about it. Padre Pio tapped him on the shoulder and said: “Don’t worry.” The pain disappeared and never returned.²⁸⁸

Renata had a pierced ear drum

Renata from Parma had experienced chronic ear infections since childhood. She had a pierced eardrum, frequent discharges, and constant tinnitus. She adamantly refused the doctor’s advice to operate for many years. She went to see Padre Pio. After confession, Padre Pio said to her: “You must have an operation.” Renata moved to the front of the confessional and said: “I don’t want an operation. I just want you to touch my ear.”

Padre Pio did, and she immediately felt a sharp, unbearable pain that made her run screaming out of the church all the way to the elm tree. Then she stopped and started to feel better. Weeks later, she returned to the doctor for a check-up. After examining her ear, the doctor said: “Where have you been, to St. Rita’s? Your ear is perfectly healthy. There is no damage there at all.”²⁸⁹

Anna Maria had seizures for several years

Anna Maria suffered from convulsions for several years and was under treatment by a neurologist. Medicines were completely ineffective and the doctors were considering brain surgery. She was taken to San Giovanni Rotondo at the age of nine. After confessing with Padre Pio, she told him what she had been instructed to say: “My mother would like to know what I can do to recover.” Padre Pio replied: “And you ask me? Just pray. Prayer is enough.”

From that day the family started reciting the rosary every day. Anna Maria never suffered another attack. She also stopped taking her morning medication, but continued to take the evening dose.

A year later, Anna Maria went back to Padre Pio with her family. The mother asked Padre Pio: “Should Anna Maria have an EEG?” Padre Pio: “Do not awaken a sleeping dog.”

²⁸⁶ lasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 58-60

²⁸⁷ lasenzaniro, 2007, p. 255

²⁸⁸ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 295

²⁸⁹ Ibid., pp. 206-207

A year later, the mother returned and asked: "Should we discontinue the night medication?" Padre Pio: "If she continues taking those sedatives, what will she take years from now if she should have need of them?" Anna Maria stopped taking the medication. She became a teacher. She never experienced a seizure again.²⁹⁰

Giovanna Russo's mother has chest pains

Giovanna Russo from San Giovanni Rotondo testified that her mom had severe chest pains and thought that her end was near. Giovanna ran to the friary and spoke about it to Padre Pio.

Padre Pio: "You always see the dark side. She is alright, and perhaps at this very moment she is chatting with her neighbors." Giovanna ran back home: "When I went home I saw mom chatting with her friends."²⁹¹

"What pneumonia are you talking about; your mother has malaria!"

In 1917 Nina Campanile's mother was gravely ill. The doctor had diagnosed double pneumonia. Nina went to Padre Pio to ask him to pray for her mother who was sick in bed. Padre Pio said: "What pneumonia are you talking about; your mother has malaria!" Nina went back to the doctor. He reassessed the diagnosis, and with proper treatment Nina's mother recovered.²⁹²

Vittorina Ventrella has Spanish flu

On September 21st 1918 Nina Campanile told Padre Pio that all the members of her family had been hit by the Spanish flu. She was especially concerned about her sister Vittorina, who was married with three children, and expecting the fourth. No pregnant woman had been known to recover from the Spanish flu. Padre Pio said: "Even if you see her pass away, you must believe that she will be healed." Vittorina recovered.²⁹³

Agnese Stump's osteosarcoma

Agnese Stump testified in 1971 that in October 1968, a biopsy of her left knee revealed an osteosarcoma. The tumor had already spread to her bone marrow and bloodstream.

On December 1968 she went to pray at Padre Pio's tomb. She dreamed of Padre Pio who told her to discard the crutches. Soon after, she was completely well.

Her doctor called his colleagues and showed them the x-rays before and after. The parts of the tibia that had been destroyed by the tumor had been replaced by healthy bone.

Pointing at Agnese he said to his colleagues: "Look at the miracle woman."^{294 295}

To Joe Greco: "Well then, is your father all right?"

Joe Greco had a dream in which he met with Padre Pio on a road and asked him to save his sick father. Joe's father recovered soon the dream.

Months later, he went to thank Padre Pio. As soon as he knelt down in the confessional, Padre Pio said: "Well then, is your father all right?"²⁹⁶

²⁹⁰ Bruno, 1970, pp. 169-172

²⁹¹ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 254

²⁹² Malatesta, 1999, p. 138

²⁹³ Iasenzaniro, 2007, pp. 645-646

²⁹⁴ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 382-383

²⁹⁵ Schug, 1987, 85-89

²⁹⁶ Viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UbgXRODiT04>

The remarkable healing of Fra' Giovanni Maria Sammarone da Trivento

Fra' Giovanni Sammarone was the cook of the convent. On September 20th 1950, he was diagnosed with a severe form of pulmonary tuberculosis. As he was leaving for the sanatorium, Padre Pio told Him: "Trust the Lord. I will pray for you." Fra' Giovanni returned to the convent two years later, perfectly healed.

P. Marcellino Lasenzaniro offers an account of the events: Fra Giovanni Sammarone of Trivento went to San Giovanni Rotondo on November 9th 1948 to serve as cook for the community of friars. He began to feel unwell in 1950, often running a high fever and coughing up much blood. Fra Giovanni reported: "I was diagnosed with a severe form of tuberculosis. Dr. Sanguinetti bluntly told me what lay ahead: 'Fra Giovanni. Your days are numbered. Prepare yourself to meet with God.' I told this to Padre Pio who replied: 'Forget about the doctors. They don't know anything.'"

My superiors then sent me to a sanitarium for clerics in Arco di Trento. Before I left, Padre Pio said to me: "The Lord will help you and you can be sure that you will come back in good shape."

I remained at Arco for about two years. When I left San Giovanni Rotondo, I weighed 54 kilos. When I returned, the scales indicated 82 kilos. Padre Pio was very happy when I returned and said to me: "Now I will tell you, because you must know this. Humanly speaking, there was, in effect, nothing more that could be done for you. Rather, your death sentence had already been written, but I tore it from God's hands. But you cannot imagine what the price of your healing cost me. On that account, no more nonsense from you. Look at yourself carefully because if you get sick again, don't come back to me, because I am not inclined to again suffer what I suffered for you. I shed so much blood for you!"

Fra Giovanni testified the above at Larino on September 9th 1986. He died on April 30th 2001.

After Padre Pio's death

Bill McLaughlin in a severe car crash

In 1995, when Bill McLaughlin was 23 years old, he was involved in a severe car crash. He was airlifted to Dublin. The doctors said that if he survived he would be a vegetable. The chaplain at the hospital was a Capuchin friar. He had one of Padre Pio's gloves and passed it over Bill's body.

Within 15 minutes, Bill had started to move his arms and legs. The nurse called the doctor who said that he could not understand what was happening. After a few days, he had fully recovered.

He was sent to physiotherapy. When his name was called, he entered the treatment area. Looking at her notes, the physiotherapist said: "It's not you that I am looking for. Bill McLaughlin should be in a wheelchair."

When he went to see his family doctor, the doctor said to him: "You should be dead. A brain scan has revealed the extent of your injuries, and part of your brain has been completely destroyed. But you have no symptoms!"

Bill went to Rome in 1999 for Padre Pio's beatification. Bill and his family also went to San Giovanni Rotondo after Padre Pio's canonization. His story is recorded in the convent.²⁹⁷

To Antonio Bandolino: "Don't forget to go to the church, to visit my tomb."

Antonio Badolino, aged fifty-three, had been unable to sit or walk for 33 years as a result of an accident. He had multiple fractures of pelvis, chronic generalized polyarthritis, and

²⁹⁷ Keane, 2007, pp. 52-56

cardio respiratory deficiency. He had been hospitalized 54 times in hospitals throughout Italy.

He was brought to Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza a few years after Padre Pio's death in urgent need of oxygen. During the night, he was visited by a monk who ordered him to get up and walk. Struggling and perspiring, he obeyed, got up from the bed, and accompanied his strange director who silently visited the bedside of each patient in each of the rooms of his hospital wing.

Back in his room, the monk said: "Don't forget to go down to the church to visit my tomb." It was only then that he realized that the monk was Padre Pio. He had never seen Padre Pio and had never believed in him. He was an atheist. The following day he was dancing and jumping about. The real miracle came afterwards, with his conversion.²⁹⁸

"Don't look down on the people of my house, because every brick in it is a drop of my blood."

On December 12th 1968, a man was an inpatient in the orthopedic ward at Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza, the hospital of Padre Pio. He kept harassing the sisters and the nurses, and cursing Padre Pio for not helping him. He had never seen Padre Pio. The man fell asleep around midnight. He was awakened by a friar who told him: "Get up, get up." The friar took him by the arm, and walked with him down the hallway, telling him not to swear and to behave himself. The friar then said: "And don't look down on the people of my house, because every brick in it is a drop of my blood." The friar accompanied him back to bed and said: "Now ring the bell, get washed and dressed, and tomorrow morning go to confession and communion. And don't swear anymore, otherwise worse things will happen to you. Then come to visit my tomb."

The happening threw the whole hospital into turmoil. The sisters and the nurses were stunned, and were crying. At 5 o'clock in the morning, the man was kneeling in church waiting for confession and communion. He told everybody: "I have been healed."²⁹⁹

²⁹⁸ Bruno, 1970, pp. 230-231

²⁹⁹ Iasenzaniro, 2007, pp. 656-657

4. Perfume: Where did it come from?

Anywhere, and in the most unexpected situations

Whenever anyone smells the perfume it is a sign that God has bestowed some grace through the intercession of Padre Pio. The scents are violets, lilies, roses, incense, or even fresh tobacco.

The perfume always has a positive value. It testifies to his presence as an approval for something going on, a warning of approaching danger, an appeal against sin and temptation, a message of comfort to a soul in distress, an answer to a cry for help, the announcement or the confirmation that he has heard our prayer or request. ^{300 301}

Padre Romolo

Padre Romolo testified in 1921: "In 1919 I passed by this convent. Padre Pio was accompanying the bishop of Melfi outside the convent. His handkerchief fell. A friar who picked it up gave it to me. I took it to my convent in Umbria. The handkerchief was in my suitcase for twenty days. When I opened it, it still carried the scent in all its intensity despite the time that had elapsed."³⁰²

Padre Romolo: "The small drawer of the nightstand in my cell contained a bandage that had been used to dress the wound on Padre Pio's side. This nightstand has been in my cell for a year now, and every time I open the drawer, I notice Padre Pio's scent."³⁰³

Grazia Formichelli

Grazia Formichelli, the midwife who delivered the future Padre Pio, reported: "I was on the mountain picking berries and was walking backwards. Suddenly I smelled the perfume of Padre Pio. I lifted my head, turned around, and saw a steep precipice behind me. Another step, and I would have fallen into it."³⁰⁴

Domenico Tognola

Domenico Tognola of Zurich, Switzerland wrote the following to the convent of San Giovanni Rotondo: "One morning I awoke and experienced a strong odor of violets, roses, and lilies. I recognized that it was associated with Padre Pio and wondered what it could mean. I later understood its meaning when the postman brought me a letter from my brother who I had not seen for thirty-two years, and had presumed was dead. I had been praying to Padre Pio for any kind of news concerning my brother, and this was an answer to my prayer."³⁰⁵

Gian Carlo Pedriali

Gian Carlo Pedriali wrote a book on Padre Pio called "I Have Seen Padre Pio". He described what happened when he went, out of curiosity, to see Padre Pio: "I was standing

³⁰⁰ Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 31-54

³⁰¹ Malatesta, 02, 232-234

³⁰² Castelli, 2011, p. 191

³⁰³ Ibid., p. 191

³⁰⁴ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 71

³⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 71

in the church with my young son, when I first saw him being greeted by a crowd of people. I was some distance away. All at once, a sharp and pleasant odor invaded my nostrils. At precisely that moment, my son pulled at my sleeve asking what the perfume was."^{306 307}

James Bulmann

One particular morning, James Bulmann, an American seminarian, had the privilege of serving at Padre Pio's Mass. Afterwards, he told the friars: "While answering the prayers at the foot of the altar, I noticed a beautiful perfume, the likes of which I have never smelled before. I had come with little knowledge of Padre Pio and did not know of this phenomenon."³⁰⁸

Dorothy Gaudiose

Dorothy Gaudiose was standing before Padre Pio with two Sisters of Charity. She said to Padre Pio (in Italian): "Padre, these are two American nuns. They say they have a question for you." He glanced at them and said to Dorothy (in Italian): "I know what they want; they want to know how they stand before God. Tell them to follow the rules of their order and continue as they have been doing." Dorothy turned to the nuns and said: "Sisters, what question have you for Padre Pio?" They answered almost in unison: "Tell him we want to know how we stand before God."³⁰⁹

Ginette Estebe

Ginette Estebe from Royan in France reported: "I was paralyzed on my left side, arms and legs; and my face was drawn and deformed. Eighteen doctors had told me that I was incurable. One day I was told about Padre Pio. I decided to write him a letter. It took three days to write the letter with my right hand. After I sent the letter I found that I could use my arms, hands, and legs. After a short time, I was entirely healed. I went to thank Padre Pio. I was in a hall with a crowd of many other people. He recognized me, and beckoned me to him. He blessed me and put his hand on my head."³¹⁰

Padre Clemente Tomay da Postiglione

Padre Clemente lived in the convent for 26 years and was confessor and friend of Padre Pio. He testified that on October 3rd 1923, while approaching Padre Pio, he was "surrounded by an intense perfume of violets, so intense that I was almost overcome. It persisted for about ten minutes."

He also reported: "I was bringing Holy Communion to the home of Dr. Sanguinetti, who was sick. When I rang the bell, I found myself enveloped by a strong perfume. Back at the Friary I told Padre Pio about this experience and asked him, "Padre, why did you make me smell your perfume?" Padre Pio replied: "Because I'm so fond of you."³¹¹

Swollen lips

A woman from Switzerland convinced her son to visit Padre Pio with her. He agreed on the condition that he would not have to kiss his hand: "Such practices belong to the Middle Ages." After the confession, he kissed Padre Pio's hand without thinking about his earlier comment to his mother. When he returned to his mother a little while later, she noticed that

³⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 71

³⁰⁷ Parente, 1968, p. 58

³⁰⁸ Gaudiose, 1974, pp. 71-72

³⁰⁹ Ibid., xiv-xv

³¹⁰ Ibid., xiii

³¹¹ Ingoldsby 1978, pp. 94-95

his lips were very swollen and were blue in colour. As he explained what had happened, she noticed that his breath carried a strong odour of violets. The swelling lasted for five days. So also did the perfume on his breath.

Perfume before Mass:

At 4:45 in the morning, Carlo Pedriali was in the sacristy with his three-year-old son waiting for Padre Pio's morning Mass. As soon as Padre Pio entered, the child pulled on his father's sleeve: "Daddy, where is this smell of perfume coming from?"

Perfume during Mass:

Fra Modestino, the doorkeeper of the convent, reported: "I was serving Padre Pio's Mass when I started smelling his perfume. It was so intense that I was about to faint, and mentally asked him to stop. The perfume stopped. Later I asked Padre Pio about it. "My son it's not me. It's the Lord. He decides who smells it, and when. Everything happens if and when He wants."³¹²

Perfume at home:

A woman involved in an accident broke her arm and shoulder. After three years of many surgical procedures, the doctors said that she would never be able to use her arm. She went to Padre Pio. He said: "Don't despair. The arm will recover." She went back home. No improvement. Three months later, on September 17th 1930, feast day of the wounds of St. Francis, she and everyone in her family, and even the neighbors smelled a strong scent of daffodils and roses. It lasted for about 15 minutes. Her arm returned to normal. The radiographs showed no abnormality in the bones and cartilages.

Perfume at work:

Alberto del Fante, a writer, had promised Padre Pio that he would make the sign of the Cross and say a prayer before he started working. On February 28th 1931 he started to write an essay without first making the sign of the Cross. He suddenly smelled incense. He called his wife, his children and the maid, and asked them if they could smell anything. They all reported a strong smell of incense. He got the message.

Perfume after a car accident:

A woman testified: "My husband was taken to the hospital in Taranto with life-threatening injuries after a car accident. After several days without any sign of improvement, I prayed to Padre Pio. I smelled a marvelous perfume of lilies. From then on, my husband began to rapidly recover."

Perfume after a telegram:

On October 1949 Maria Galiano was dying from the effects of a uterine adenocarcinoma. Her daughter sent a telegram and two letters to Padre Pio. On April 29th 1950, Maria smelled an intense perfume. It lasted for two days. By the third day, she felt completely healed. The doctors ran a series of tests and reported that "the tumor has completely disappeared."

Perfume for the bishop:

The Bishop Carlo Rossi was sent to investigate Padre Pio in 1921. He was particularly impressed by the perfume, and examined the cell and found only plain soap. "I have smelled this very intense and pleasant fragrance, similar to the scent of violets. It arises in waves when he walks by, and from his spot in the choir, even at a distance. The scent was

³¹² Modestino, 2001. Pp. 55-56

present in the hair of Padre Pio even two years after it had been cut, and it was also present in the blood that flowed from his stigmata and in the bandages that he used.”³¹³

Giuseppina Marchetti

On July 1930, Giuseppina Marchetti who was 24 years old had her right arm and shoulder badly crushed in an accident. Several doctors examined her, but were not able to help. She visited Padre Pio with her father. Padre Pio said to her: "You will recover."

Back home, on September 17th 1932 both father and daughter smelled an intense perfume of daffodils and roses that lasted for 15 minutes. She felt fully healed. X-rays were taken and revealed that all was perfectly normal. ^{314 315 316 317 318}

Perfume in Pennsylvania:

Robert Hopcke, a Lutheran seminarian, was attending a Catholic Mass with his friend Vincenzo Mandato. "I remember smelling very distinctly a strong odor of roses just before the homily, It went away, then it came back during the Creed. It faded and came back during the Consecration of the Host." Robert looked around but there was no woman nearby, and no flowers, and the candles were far away. After Mass, Vincenzo asked Robert: "Did you smell anything during Mass?" They had had the same experience. Later Robert wanted to report the episode to Vincenzo's father, Mr. Mandato, who had known Padre Pio well. Mr. Mandato explained in detail about the perfume of Padre Pio that Robert had smelled. Robert concluded: "I cannot deny that before I even spoke of what I smelled, Mr. Mandato had described it perfectly."³¹⁹

Perfume and Dr. Festa:

Dr. Festa was one of the early examiners of Padre Pio's wounds. He testified: "On my first visit I took from Padre Pio a small cloth stained with blood, in order to perform a microscopic examination back in Rome. I am entirely deprived of the sense of smell, but the persons that were with me in the car smelled a fragrance very distinctly, and said that it corresponded to the perfume emanating from Padre Pio. They didn't know that I had the cloth, enclosed in a case."

He went on to describe the following: "In Rome, I placed the cloth in a cabinet in my study. The room was frequently filled with perfume, and many patients spontaneously asked me what was the origin of the perfume."^{320 321}

On another occasion, Dr. Festa took possession of a cloth that had been covering Padre Pio's side wound for laboratory analysis in Rome. While travelling from San Giovanni Rotondo to Rome, several people told him they smelled the perfume of Padre Pio. And a number of his patients reported that they smelled the same perfume when they visited him.^{322 323}

³¹³ Castelli, 2011, pp. 124-126

³¹⁴ Winkowska, 1988, p. 118

³¹⁵ Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 165-166

³¹⁶ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 134-135

³¹⁷ De Liso, 1962, p. 120

³¹⁸ Napolitano, 1979, p. 138

³¹⁹ Ruffin 1991, pp. 320-321

³²⁰ Capuano, 2012, pp. 268-269

³²¹ Winkowska, 88, pp. 115-116

³²² Ibid., pp. 115-116

³²³ Parente, 1968, p. 56

The rose to the shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii

On the 19th September 1968, four days before Padre Pio's death, Padre Alberto D'Apolito was present when a spiritual son brought Padre Pio a bouquet of roses for the 50th anniversary of his stigmata. Padre Pio asked the spiritual son to take one of the roses to the shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii. He did so. One of the Sisters at the shrine placed the rose in a vase with other flowers. On the 23rd September, the day that Padre Pio died, the Sister saw that the flowers had withered in the vase. She was about to throw them out when she noticed that the rose from Padre Pio "had closed and become a fresh and perfumed bud again." The rose was placed in a glass container.³²⁴

One year later, when Padre Alberto went on a pilgrimage to Pompeii, he and his group saw the same rose "preserved in its container, still fresh, with the stem slightly yellowed."³²⁵

The Miscony family

Dr. Zuhair Yusuf Miscony, his wife Dr. Myriam, and their daughter Zena, all Catholics of the Syrian Rite in Iraq, moved to London. In July 1989 they were given a prayer card with a relic of Padre Pio. They recited the prayer every day. One evening Dr. Miscony was hit by a motorcycle on his way home from the University College Hospital. He was, "thrown about fifteen feet in the air and landed on the road again with a mighty thud". The motorcyclist tried to help, but Dr. Miscony stood up and said he was fine, and went home. His wife and daughter, told of the accident, rushed him to the hospital to be examined for possible internal injuries. Many doctors and tests later, "there was no sign of any injury whatsoever".

Soon after, Dr. Miscony was watching a video on Padre Pio at home when he smelled what seemed to be "a sphere of perfume in the middle of the room - like lilies, but more beautiful." Half an hour later, Myriam and Zena returned home. On entering the TV room, they were immediately struck by the perfume. Miriam said: "He's here." They went through the house and "checked every bottle, but none was producing the perfume they smelled." The perfume "lasted from 6 PM to around midnight."³²⁶

Don Pierino and friends

Don Pierino Galeone asked Padre Pio if he would have lunch with him and his friends. Padre Pio: "Yes, I'll join you." Don Pierino: "Once at the table, a strong perfume inundated the room, and everybody smelled it. It lasted only for a short time. Back at the convent, I thanked Padre Pio and asked why he had left so soon." Padre Pio: "My son it was too hot in the room."³²⁷

Don Pierino

Don Pierino asked Padre Pio to be present the day of his ordination to priesthood. Don Pierino: "I was prostrated at the altar when I started smelling the strong perfume of Padre Pio. It continued unabated during the whole time of the liturgical ceremony."³²⁸

Lauro Bonaguro paralyzed

Lauro Bonaguro from Ferrara had a stroke in 1998. He was paralyzed on the right side, and his ability to speak was seriously affected. After a month in the hospital, he went home still unable to walk or raise his arm and suffered sharp pains. On May 2nd 1999, while watching the ceremony of Padre Pio's beatification on TV, he and his wife smelled a strong

³²⁴ Napolitano, 1979, p. 223

³²⁵ Alberto, 2007, pp. 387-389

³²⁶ Gallagher, 1995, pp. 224-226

³²⁷ Galeone, 2009, pp. 74-75

³²⁸ Ibid., pp. 74-75

perfume that was, “almost suffocating”. The wife looked everywhere in the house and even in the garden. There was no explanation. At the moment when the image of Padre Pio was unveiled, the scent become even stronger. Its intensity subsided after several minutes.

Soon after, Lauro’s wife saw him standing in the bathroom combing his hair. He hadn’t realized that he was walking normally, and was using his right arm with complete freedom. He started working again soon after.³²⁹

Padre Pellegrino

“The night that Padre Pio died, Dr. Sala was with me. We smelled the perfume. I can’t explain what kind of perfume it was, but I can say that it was very intense.”³³⁰

³²⁹ lasenzaniro, 1997, pp. 657-659

³³⁰ di Flumeri, 1996. Positio II, p. 239

5 Radiance: Skin and clothes glowing like Moses on Mt. Sinai and Jesus on Mt. Tabor

“As Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant the skin of his face had become radiant.” Exodus, 34:29

Transfiguration: “His face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light.” Mt. 17:2

Padre Raffaele around midnight

Padre Raffaele da Sant’Elia a Pianisi wrote that on August 19th 1919, he was staying in the convent in a cell not far from Padre Pio’s cell. It was very hot and he couldn’t sleep.

At around midnight, he got up and as he opened the door of his cell in the dark, he saw Padre Pio, radiant in light, holding Baby Jesus. Padre Pio walked down the hallway towards his own cell, passing by Padre Raffaele’s room. Padre Pio didn’t realize that Padre Raffaele was watching.^{331 332}

Lucia Iadanza the night of Christmas Eve 1922

On the night of Christmas Eve, December 24th 1922, Lucia Iadanza and three other women had been preparing the altar for the Midnight Mass. When they finished, they sat around a brazier, waiting for the time of the celebration.

While the other three women were dozing, Lucia saw Padre Pio coming downstairs in the sacristy. He was radiant in a blazing light, holding Baby Jesus in his arms.

As Padre Pio approached the women around the brazier, the vision disappeared. Padre Pio then saw Lucia looking at him in amazement. He said: “Lucia, what did you see?” Lucia replied: “Father, I saw everything.” Padre Pio whispered: “Don’t tell anybody.”^{333 334}

Nicola Pazienza in his backyard

Padre Agostino Daniele reported in his diary on April 8th 1946: “The farmer Nicola Pazienza who lives not far from the convent told me that one summer night, he saw from his yard Padre Pio’s room resplendent in a light brighter than the sun, and Padre Pio was within this light. I later stood in that yard, and saw that from there, Padre Pio’s window is clearly visible.”^{335 336}

Dr. Giorgio Festa during surgery

Dr. Giorgio Festa reported that during the surgery performed on Padre Pio in 1925, he had the opportunity to see one of his wounds, and “from the edges, there emanated brief but evident luminous radiations.”³³⁷

A young university student sees Padre Pio in a dazzling light

Cleonice Morcaldi reported that a young university student accompanied his fiancée to the convent, and she invited him to attend the Mass of Padre Pio. He did so, and they come back for several days, always sitting in the same spot.

³³¹ Capuano, 2012, p. 275

³³² Convento Frati Minori, 2001, p. 166

³³³ Modestino, 2001, p. 41

³³⁴ Capuano, 2012, p. 275

³³⁵ Ibid., pp. 277-278

³³⁶ Agostino, 2012, p. 189

³³⁷ Capuano, 2012, p. 277

One day the fiancée told Cleonice in secret that since the first day, at every mass of Padre Pio that he attended, he saw Padre Pio enveloped in a dazzling light, with a mass of thorns on his head and blood flowing down his face.

After Mass he told Padre Pio about it. Padre Pio: "Thank the Lord, don't be shocked because I don't suffer as much as it seems. Don't tell anybody. The Lord loves you. Be always faithful to him."

Cleonice asked Padre Pio if it was true. He replied: "And do you doubt it?"^{338 339}

A few years later, Padre Pio blessed their wedding.³⁴⁰

Enrico Cerioni sees Padre Pio "full of light" during Mass

Enrico Cerioni was present at one of Padre Pio's masses. Upon his return to Rome, he wrote a letter to Fra' Daniele Natale about his experience. Fra' Daniele showed the letter to Padre Pio asking if Enrico had written the truth. Padre Pio confirmed.

Enrico Cerioni wrote: "I saw two rows on Angels coming out of the sacristy in front of Padre Pio. He reached the altar while God's Mother took her place at his side. As soon as the Mass began, Padre Pio become fully radiant and remained so throughout the celebration of the Mass. At the Elevation of the Host, Jesus appeared and he became one with Padre Pio. It was difficult for me to distinguish between either of them. During the Communion the fusion became complete."³⁴¹

Fra Daniele Natale and Padre Agostino see a giant

Fra Daniele Natale and Padre Agostino were praying in the choir, when the door opened, and Padre Pio came in. Fra Daniele: "I became breathless because I saw a giant, an enormous man coming through the door. I had never seen Padre Pio like that before. He was tall. He was as tall as the Crucifix in the choir. He knelt down at his usual place and stayed motionless for about fifteen minutes. Then he got up, but what a transformation! He seemed to have aged. I approached Padre Agostino and asked him if he had seen the same thing. He had, and added: "We will never understand who Padre Pio is."³⁴²

³³⁸ Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 454-6

³³⁹ Schug, 1987, p. 92

³⁴⁰ Alberto, 2007, pp. 109-111

³⁴¹ Iasenzaniro, 2007, pp. 668-669

³⁴² Ibid., pp. 591-592

6 Ecstasy: Padre Pio's interactions with Jesus, the Virgin Mary, St. Francis, and the Guardian Angel

Since infancy Padre Pio had visual contact with the guardian Angel, who helped him, and by the devils, who tormented him.

In a letter on December 13th 1912, he wrote: "The companion of my infancy tries to alleviate the pain inflicted on me by those impure apostates."³⁴³

By the age of five, Padre Pio frequently saw Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and Saint Francis.^{344 345}

At Christmas, Padre Pio often saw Baby Jesus who played with him.

In a letter to Padre Agostino on January 18th 1913, he wrote: "I am a source of amusement for Baby Jesus. I'm sorry that He has chosen a toy of such little value."³⁴⁶

Antonietta Pompilio

In 1916 Antonietta Pompilio asked Padre Pio how to meditate. She reported that during the conversation, "He started talking about the agony in the Gethsemane, and then he went in ecstasy. For about an hour he stayed with the eyes closed, without moving. Then he returned normal and said: 'God be blessed. Let's continue.'"

"I see what you don't see."

Padre Costantino reported that he, the architect Antonio Gentile, and his son were conversing in Padre Pio's room.

The young man asked Padre Pio: "What do you see when you distribute the Holy Communion to the people? You stare at the host in a very unusual manner!"

Padre Pio replied: "I see what you don't see."³⁴⁷

"Yes. I have visions of heavenly persons: Our Lord, Our Lady, St. Francis."

Mons. Raffaello Rossi, the Inquisitor sent from the Holy Office, formally asked Padre Pio: "Does anything mystical happen to you during your prayers?"

Padre Pio: "Yes. I have visions of heavenly persons: of Our Lord, of Our Lady, of Saint Francis."³⁴⁸

"The Madonna never leaves"

Padre Tarcisio Zullo da Cervinara and Padre Mariano da Magliano Santa Croce were in Padre Pio's room. They took courage and asked him: 'Father, is the Madonna in the room at this moment?'

Padre Pio's answer: "Wrong formulation. You should have asked 'Did the Madonna ever leave this room?'"³⁴⁹

³⁴³ Epistolario I, 2011, p. 321

³⁴⁴ Agostino, 2012, p. 29

³⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 53

³⁴⁶ Epistolario I, p. 331

³⁴⁷ Capobianco 2006, pp. 246-247

³⁴⁸ Castelli, 2011, p. 221

³⁴⁹ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 136

“To turn Paradise upside down”

Maria Cassano confessed weekly with Padre Pio weekly and went to his mass every day. On one occasion, she said during confession: “Padre, last time I was here I didn’t understand what you meant to say. I made you suffer terribly.”

Padre Pio replied accusingly: “And you went off and told everybody about it right away!” “No, Padre, this was something we discussed in the confessional. It was secret. I didn’t tell anyone. I only called upon the Madonna and the saints.”

Padre Pio: “So you think it’s a small thing to turn Paradise upside-down?”^{350 351}

“Jesus cried and suffered.”

Cleonice Morcaldi reported: “At Christmas, the face of Padre Pio was transformed. He was in continual ecstasy. Like Saint Francis, he was seeing a living Baby Jesus as he was in the grotto of Bethlehem. He celebrated the three Christmas Masses one after the other on the same night. He cried a lot. He said: “In the grotto Baby Jesus cried, suffered, and Mary and Joseph suffered with him. Outside, the angels and the shepherds were singing and were in a state of great joy. But it is better to remain in the company to Jesus.”³⁵²

³⁵⁰ Duchess Suzanne, 1983, p. 124

³⁵¹ Malatesta, 1997, p. 198

³⁵² Morcaldi, 2013, p. 168

7 Levitation: defying gravity when there is a special compelling need to fulfill

The flying monk

Padre Damaso da Sant'Elia a Pianisi, superior of the convent, testified: "During WWII several pilots of the Anglo America Air Force were in the Bari area conducting a number of bombing missions in the area which commenced on September 8th 1943. They were of different nationalities, and of different religions (Catholics, Orthodox, Muslims, Protestants, Jewish). They reported one particularly sensational phenomenon.

Every time the pilots approached the area of Gargano, near San Giovanni Rotondo, they saw a friar in the sky, prohibiting them from dropping their bombs in the vicinity.

Foggia and almost all the towns in Puglia were bombed several times, but not a single bomb fell on San Giovanni Rotondo.

A direct witness of this phenomenon was the General of the Italian Air Force, Bernardo Rosini, who was stationed with the Anglo American Allied Forces in Bari at that time.

General Rosini reported to me that the pilots and their crews were talking about a friar who appeared in the sky with his arms outstretched, forcing the planes to turn back.

Since the reports were repeated by a number of pilots, the Commanding General decided to intervene personally.

Everyone was talking about these incredible stories.

He took command of a squadron of bombers with the intention to destroy a cache of German supplies that had been identified in the vicinity of San Giovanni Rotondo. When the squadron returned, the General appeared devastated.

He reported that as they approached the target, he and his pilots saw a friar with his arms outstretched in mid-air at the height at which the planes were flying. The bombs were released from the planes and fell into open areas. The planes made a sharp turn and returned to base without the pilots bombing the designated site at San Giovanni Rotondo.

The pilots and their crews talked to everybody at the base about what had happened, and wanted to know who the friar was. The Commanding General of the USAF squadrons at that time was General Nathan F. Twining.

After the war, the General was told about Padre Pio and decided to visit him with some of the pilots who had flown in the squadron. The pilots immediately recognized Padre Pio.

When Padre Pio saw the general he told him: "So you are the one who wanted to destroy everything."

The General become a friend of Padre Pio.^{353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360}

"I assure you, my son; it was like walking over bricks."

Padre Andrea D'Ascanio reported: "The sacristy was full of people and they were looking at the door through which Padre Pio had to pass in order to reach the confessional. There was no way that Padre Pio could reach the confessional walking through such a large crowd. The door didn't open, and I saw Padre Pio walking over the heads of those people

³⁵³ di Flumeri, 1996. Positio III/1, pp. 689-690

³⁵⁴ Morcaldi 2013, pp. 25-27

³⁵⁵ Rega, 2005, pp. 202-211

³⁵⁶ McCaffery, 1978, pp. 31-32

³⁵⁷ Schug, 1987, pp. 80-84

³⁵⁸ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 249-253

³⁵⁹ Capuano, 2012, pp. 196-199

³⁶⁰ Covino, 2007, pp. 93-94

and reach the confessional. Later I asked him about it. Padre Pio: "I assure you, my son; it was like walking over bricks."

Padre Raffaele reported a similar episode.^{361 362}

"I had to step over those men."

Answering a specific formal question by Mons. Rossi, Padre Pio confirmed that on one particular occasion after hearing the confessions of a group of men, he walked over their heads: "The sacristy was overcrowded with men, it was hot; we were suffocating. I saw that the best thing was to leave, so that they would then leave too. I remember that there was no room to walk: I had to step over those men; then I found myself outside. From there I turned, and sent them away."³⁶³

"How hard are those heads! Harder than bricks!"

Don Pierino Galeone reported the following: "At around 11:30 one morning after hearing the women's confessions, Padre Pio opened the little door of the confessional, stood on the step, and looked around. The church was crowded with people waiting for him to pass. There was no room for him to get through. I was near the major altar, on the right. All of a sudden, I saw Padre Pio rise about two meters from the floor. There appeared to be some sort of cloud about him and it enveloped him completely. The friars looked for him but they couldn't find him. He had disappeared. In the afternoon the friars asked Padre Pio for an explanation. He replied: "This morning, I felt dizzy standing outside the confessional, and fearing that I would fall to the ground, I asked the angels to help me through that embarrassing situation. They helped me to walk over the heads of the people. How hard are those heads! Harder than bricks!"³⁶⁴

"Padre Pio's feet were six inches off the ground. He was just gliding."

Brother Bill Martin (who later became Father Joseph Pius) from Brooklyn, New York, helped Padre Pio during his last three years (1965-1968). He physically caught Padre Pio when he was about to fall in his last Mass.

He reported: "It was near the end of Padre Pio's life. Another brother and I were helping him to the altar. He was about to say Mass. I remember thinking 'Why, his weight on my arm feels like nothing at all.' That's when I looked at the floor. Padre Pio's feet were six inches off the ground. He was just gliding. He was levitating on his way to say Mass. I exchanged a glance with the other monk. We had come to the same realization at about the same time. We never spoke about it. We just knew."³⁶⁵

"How is Padre Placido?" "Do you doubt it?"

Padre Placido Bux, a former classmate of Padre Pio, was dying in the hospital of San Severo. One night, he saw Padre Pio at his bedside encouraging him to have patience. He then saw Padre Pio place his hand on the glass window and disappear outside the window. In the morning he saw the imprint of a hand on the window pane. He told the story to everyone around him. The news spread, and a lot of staff and other people came to see the imprint of the hand.

Padre Piergiuliano, superior of the convent of San Severo was called, and he reprimanded Padre Placido. Every attempt was made to clean the window using detergents, but to no

³⁶¹ Dascanio, 1994, p. 66

³⁶² Capobianco, 2006, pp. 74-75

³⁶³ Castelli, 2011, p. 220

³⁶⁴ Galeone, 2009, pp. 72-74

³⁶⁵ Stauffer, 2007, pp. 4-6

avail. Padre Alberto, superior of San Giovanni Rotondo was called. He did not believe the story either. Padre Placido told him to ask Padre Pio directly, since he was his superior.

On returning to the convent, Padre Alberto approached Padre Pio but before he could say a word, Padre Pio asked: "How is Padre Placido?" Padre Alberto told him the story and of what Padre Placido had said. Padre Pio replied: "And you, do you doubt it?"

Padre Placido recovered completely from his illness.^{366 367 368}

"Oh! Evidently I didn't hear you."

Dr. Sala, Padre Pio's physician, was walking across the square in front of the church one evening when he saw Padre Pio making his way to the convent entrance. He said "Good evening" but received no answer. Padre Pio passed calmly through the unopened door and disappeared. When Dr. Sala met with Padre Pio the following day, he said: "Padre, I greeted you last night when you walked in the square, but you didn't answer." "Oh! Evidently I didn't hear you."³⁶⁹

³⁶⁶ Ingoldsby, 1978, pp. 91-92

³⁶⁷ Ruffin, 1991, p. 328

³⁶⁸ Alberto, 2007, pp. 152-156

³⁶⁹ Bruno, 1970, p. 26

8 Padre Pio and his obedient Guardian Angel in action: Chores and frequent flights

Padre Pio on the Guardian Angel

Padre Pio referred to his guardian angel as: “The companion of my infancy,”³⁷⁰ and “The little companion of my infancy.”³⁷¹

Padre Ludovico testified: “When he speaks, it seems that besides the person to whom he is speaking, there might be another one whom he might be addressing. It is commonly said that he speaks with his guardian angel.”³⁷²

While travelling through Pietrelcina in 1912, Padre Agostino passed by Pio’s house at three in the morning. Padre Pio was living there at that time. Padre Agostino was very surprised to find that the door was open, so he decided to go in. Padre Pio was in bed but not asleep: “Why do you leave the door unlocked?” he asked. Padre Pio replied: “I am not afraid. I have the guardian angel keeping watch through the night.”³⁷³

On December 13th 1912, Padre Pio wrote to Padre Agostino: “Your letter could be read with the help of the little angel. He had suggested that I sprinkle your letters with holy water before I opened them. That’s what I did with your most recent letter.”³⁷⁴

On April 20th 1915, Padre Pio wrote to Raffaolina Cerase: “Oh! What a consolation it is to know that one is always under the protection of a celestial being who will never abandon us (such an excellent thing!), even in those actions that are loathsome to God!”³⁷⁵

“Take on the good habit of always thinking about him.”³⁷⁶

“This celestial spirit never leaves us alone, from the cradle to the grave.”³⁷⁷

“He guides and protects us, especially in the sad times.”³⁷⁸

“Oh! If people could appreciate this great gift from God!”³⁷⁹

“At the moment of death, the soul will see this sweet companion.”³⁸⁰

³⁷⁰ Epistolario I, (2011), p. 321

³⁷¹ Ibid., p. 308

³⁷² Castelli, 2011, p. 191

³⁷³ Agostino, 2012, p. 292

³⁷⁴ Epistolario I, p. 321

³⁷⁵ Epistolario II, 2011, p. 403

³⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 404

³⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 404

³⁷⁸ Epistolario II, p. 404

³⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 404

³⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 404

Padre Pio's Guardian angel did chores for him and others

"Huh! Telegrams! Guardian Angels are quicker, and cheaper."

Barbara Ward was about to have surgery for multiple ovarian cysts, in St. George's Hospital in London. Bernardo Patrizi left the hospital to go to the post office, from where he sent a telegram to Padre Pio: "Barbara sick. Urgently requires your prayers." When he returned to the Hospital the receptionist asked him to take to Barbara the flowers and the telegram that had just arrived. The telegram said: "Sorry to hear of your illness. Be assured of my prayers." Next time that Bernardo was in San Giovanni Rotondo he told Padre Pio that Barbara had recovered and thanked him for the flowers and telegram. Padre Pio: "Huh! Telegrams! Guardian Angels are quicker, and cheaper."³⁸¹

"Didn't you see all those guardian angels"

One afternoon Padre Alessio was sitting with Padre Pio on the veranda. Padre Alessio started to ask him a question. Padre Pio interrupted him: "Boy, don't you see that I am busy? He later elaborated: "Didn't you see all those guardian angels going back and forth to my spiritual children, bringing me their messages?"³⁸²

"Tell her, tell him"

Padre Alessio Parente was Padre Pio's assistant from 1959 to 1961, and later, from 1965 to 1968.³⁸³ He often sat with Padre Pio while he was praying the rosary. On a number of occasions, he heard Padre Pio saying things that seemed to be completely unrelated to the rosary, such as: "Tell her that I will pray for her", "Tell him that I will knock at the Heart of Jesus to implore that grace", "Tell him that he will be present at my mass", "Tell her that the Virgin will not refuse this grace." Padre Alessio wrote that it was only years later that he began to understand what had been going on between Padre Pio and the angels.³⁸⁴

Shaken vigorously by the angel

Padre Paolino da Casacalenda told Padre Pio that if ever he needed help at night, he could send his guardian angel. One night, Padre Paolino woke up feeling as if he had been shaken vigorously. He felt totally awake. He thought about Padre Pio and ran to his cell asking if he needed anything. Padre Pio: "Yes. I am dripping with sweat and I need to change. I can't do it by myself. Please help me."³⁸⁵

"Thank your guardian Angel for not letting the Host fall to the ground."

Padre Alessio and another priest were distributing Communion to a very large number of the faithful. Padre Alessio's pix emptied sooner and he went back to the altar for the purification of the pix. He had just completed the ritual when, looking to his immediate right, he saw a host hovering in mid-air. The Host moved towards the pix and fell into the pix with an audible click. Padre Alessio was shaken by what he had seen. The Host had visibly moved, seemingly of its own accord. Later that day, Padre Alessio reported his experience to Padre Pio. Padre Pio said to him: "Boy, be more careful and do not distribute

³⁸¹ Gallagher 1995, p. 165

³⁸² Parente, 2011b, pp. 113-114

³⁸³ Ibid., p. 120

³⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 114-116

³⁸⁵ da Casacalenda, 1978, pp. 100-104

the communion so fast. Thank your guardian Angel for not letting the Host fall to the ground."^{386 387}

"Do you think that angels are as slow as the airplanes?"

Cecil Humphrey-Smith sustained major injuries in a car accident in 1955. After visiting him in hospital, his friend Marquis Sacchetti decided to go to the post office to send a telegram to Padre Pio asking for prayers. Both he and Cecil Humphrey-Smith were spiritual children of Padre Pio. At the post office, Marquis Sacchetti filled in the form for the telegram and gave it to the postal employee. The postman read the names of the sender and of the addressed, then gave him a telegram that had just arrived. It was from Padre Pio, promising prayers for a prompt and complete recovery. Sometime later, they visited Padre Pio to thank him for his prayers. When they told him about the coincidence of the telegrams, Padre Pio said: "Do you think that angels are as slow as the airplanes?"^{388 389 390}

"The angel came right away."

Padre Mariano Paladino stayed at the convent at San Giovanni Rotondo for many years, initially from 1950 to 1960, and then from 1965 to 1969. He was the first chaplain of the *Casa Sollievo Della Sofferenza*. He wrote an unpublished manuscript entitled "Memories" in which he recalled his years with Padre Pio. One day while he was at Lourdes, he prayed that his guardian angel should go to Padre Pio to ask him to pray for a special grace. Soon after, he smelled the intense perfume of Padre Pio. When he returned to the convent, Padre Pio told him: "The angel came right away. He is not disobedient like me and you. And the perfume meant that I love you."³⁹¹

"It's your angel watching over you on your way."

In 1947, Margherita Cassano was living in a single small room at one end of Viale Cappuccini, quite a distance from the convent. In those days, there were no street lights, and the road was unsafe and full of stones. She got up every morning at three in order to arrive at the church in time for Padre Pio's mass. She reported that several times while walking towards the convent in the pitch dark, she heard a male voice saying: "One, two; one, two." She was terrified. And again: "One, two; one, two." She finally reached the church. When she had a chance, she told Padre Pio that she thought she was going mad. Padre Pio: "It's your angel counting your footsteps to keep you company. It is just to let you know he is there, watching over you on your way."^{392 393}

"You were sleeping and my guardian angel was driving for you."

Piorgiorgio Biavati was driving from Florence to San Giovanni Rotondo in 1960. When he reached Napoli, he felt very tired and sleepy. He stopped at a rest area for coffee. There were three more hours of driving ahead of him. He testified: "I remember only that I started the engine and put my hands on the wheel. I don't remember a single second of the drive itself. When I reached the square in front of the friary, someone shook me by the shoulders and said: "Come on now, take over." When Biavati told Padre Pio about the episode, Padre

³⁸⁶ Parente, 2011b, pp. 108-110

³⁸⁷ di Flumeri, (1996). Positio II, p. 206

³⁸⁸ Parente, 2011b, pp. 143-144

³⁸⁹ Gallagher, 1995, pp. 155-166

³⁹⁰ Ruffin, 1991, p. 314

³⁹¹ Parente, 2011b, pp. 149-150

³⁹² Duchess Suzanne, 1983, pp. 117-118

³⁹³ Malatesta, 1997, pp. 198-9

Pio said: "You were right. You were sleeping all the way and my guardian angel was driving for you."³⁹⁴ ³⁹⁵

The guardian angels at night

One night, a group of spiritual children had just arrived at San Giovanni Rotondo. It was late, and they started discussing what they would ask Padre Pio the following day, and prayed that their guardian angels should tell him as soon as possible. When Padre Pio met with them the next day, he said: "Naughty kids, you don't leave me alone, not even at night."³⁹⁶

"You were asleep and the Guardian Angel drove your car."

Attilio De Sanctis, an attorney from Fano, was driving back home to Bologna after visiting San Giovanni Rotondo with his wife and children. During the trip, he fell asleep at the wheel. He woke up a few miles from home and asked: "Who drove my car?" His wife replied: "You were still, and didn't answer us, and you avoided several collisions at the last second. Your driving was different to usual." Two months later, he visited Padre Pio, who told him: "You were asleep and the Guardian Angel drove your car." The mystery was solved.³⁹⁷

Are you thinking that the Guardian Angel is disobedient like me and you?

Padre Lino Barbati sent his Guardian Angel to ask Padre Pio for the healing of a person. That person was not getting better. He asked Padre Pio: "Could it be that at times the Guardian Angel doesn't do what we ask him to do?" Padre Pio replied: "What? Are you thinking that he is disobedient like me and you?"³⁹⁸

"The Guardian Angel explained everything to me."

On September 7th 1912, Padre Agostino wrote a letter to Padre Pio in Greek.³⁹⁹ He knew that Padre Pio could not read Greek. Don Salvatore Pannullo was present when Padre Pio opened the letter. At the bottom of the letter, he later wrote this testimony: "Under the sanctity of oath, I testify that Padre Pio opened this letter and explained to me word by word the content. I asked him how could he read and explain the content without even knowing the Greek alphabet. He answered: "You know! The Guardian Angel explained everything to me."⁴⁰⁰

Padre Agostino wrote in his diary: "Padre Pio didn't know Greek or French. It was his Guardian Angel who explained things to him, and he answered to the point."⁴⁰¹

Padre Tarcisio Zullo testified that when he asked Padre Pio how he could understand people who spoke different languages, Padre Pio replied: "My angel helps me and translates everything."⁴⁰²

³⁹⁴ Parente 2011, pp. 195-196

³⁹⁵ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 314-315

³⁹⁶ Winkowska, 1988, pp. 107-108

³⁹⁷ Bruno, 1970, p. 148

³⁹⁸ Parente 2011b, pp. 145-146

³⁹⁹ Epistolario I, p. 302

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., 302

⁴⁰¹ Agostino, 2012, p. 288

⁴⁰² di Flumeri, 1996. Positio II, p. 630

Padre Pio asked people to send him their Guardian Angel.

“Send me your guardian angel”.^{403 404}

*“If you can’t reach me, ask your guardian angel to bring your message to me. I will help you in whatever way I can”*⁴⁰⁵

*“You may send me your guardian angel at any time, day or night, and I will be always happy to receive him.”*⁴⁰⁶

Cecil Humphrey-Smith told Padre Pio that back home he would write to him. Padre Pio: “Son, what do I want with more letters? I get so many already. Send me your Guardian Angel instead.”⁴⁰⁷

On September 20th 1945, Pia Garella decided to send a telegram to Padre Pio to commemorate the anniversary of his wounds. She was in the countryside outside of Turin, and there was no post office nearby. She remembered Padre Pio saying: “Send me your guardian Angel when you are in need.” She did. A few days later, she received a letter from her friend Rosinella Piacentino: “Padre Pio asked me to write to you and to thank you for the spiritual felicitations you sent to him.”⁴⁰⁸

Maria Pompilio testified: “One morning Padre Pio told me of something bad I had done. I couldn’t deny it, and asked how he knew. He said: “Your guardian Angel told me.”⁴⁰⁹

“It could have been really bad for you if I hadn’t sent my Guardian Angel.”

During WWII in 1943, a young engineer was walking on a country road in San Severo (Foggia) when he was approached by a group of farmers holding their pitchforks menacingly. They thought he was an enemy soldier in disguise. Just as they were about to attack him, a ferocious dog appeared out of nowhere and barked loudly at the farmers. They were scared, and retreated. When the engineer met with Padre Pio sometime later, Padre Pio said to him: “It could have been really bad for you if I hadn’t sent my Guardian Angel.”⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰³ Parente, 2011b, p. 111

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 30

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 111-112

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 156

⁴⁰⁷ Gallagher, 1995, p. 164

⁴⁰⁸ Siena, 2010, p. 124

⁴⁰⁹ di Flumeri, 1996. Positio II/1, p. 806

⁴¹⁰ Ibid., p. 1065

9 The devil and Padre Pio: physical assaults. Temptations. Hell. Exorcisms

Padre Pio on the devil

*"The human soul is the battlefield between God and Satan."*⁴¹¹

"If all the devils would take bodily form they would blot out the light of the sun."^{412 413}

"The devil enters a soul through only one door: our will power. There are no secret doors."^{414 415}

*"Never has the devil found such fertile territory as in this era when his very existence is denied by so many."*⁴¹⁶

*"The enemy plays strong with the weak, but he is a coward when he is faced with the weapon in hand."*⁴¹⁷

"The devil is like a rabid dog tied to a chain. He cannot seize anyone beyond the length of the chain. And you: keep your distance. If you get too close, you allow yourself to be caught."^{418 419 420}

*"Satan is like a chained dog. He cannot go further than the chain. But if you get close to him, he will bite you."*⁴²¹

"If you saw the devil you would die of fright."

Padre Alberto D'Apolito was a student at the seraphic college in 1921 and remembers Padre Pio promising the students they would no longer hear infernal noises during the night. One of the students said: "Padre Pio, I am not afraid of the devil; send him to me and I will fight him." Padre Pio answered: "You don't know what you are saying. If you saw the devil you would die of fright."⁴²²

With the damned and demons in hell

Padre Benedetto reported to the Holy Office in 1921: "Padre Pio has experienced the torments of hell with the damned every 10 or 15 days. He has been with the damned and the demons to save him and others from that place."⁴²³

⁴¹¹ Padre Pio, 2010

⁴¹² Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 116

⁴¹³ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 47

⁴¹⁴ Del Fante, 1950, p. 549

⁴¹⁵ De Liso, 1962, p. 45

⁴¹⁶ Bruno, 1970, p. 150

⁴¹⁷ Epistolario II, p. 77

⁴¹⁸ Bruno, 1970, p. 157

⁴¹⁹ Del Fante, 1950, p. 562

⁴²⁰ De Liso, 1962, p. 45

⁴²¹ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 120

⁴²² Alberto, 2007, p. 79

⁴²³ di Flumeri, 1996. Positio I/2, p. 735

Padre Pio saw the devil in other forms

“He was in the form of an enormous dog.”

While in Sant’Elia a Pianisi Brother Pio saw the devil coming in to his cell. He reported in a letter: “He was in the form of an enormous dog, with a lot of smoke coming out of his mouth. The dog talked and said: ‘It’s him! It’s him.’ He smelled strongly of sulphur. The horrible animal leapt out of the window, jumped onto the roof of the nearby building, and disappeared.”^{424 425}

“Whoever you are repeat after me ‘Long live Jesus’.

In 1909, the devil appeared to Padre Pio while he was in Gesualdo in the form of Padre Agostino. He tried to discourage him from continuing in the religious life. Padre Pio was disconcerted, and at the moment when he began to suspect what was happening, he said: “Whoever you are, repeat after me ‘Long live Jesus’.” The visitor disappeared in a cloud of smoke living behind a disgusting stench.^{426 427}

The devil in horrible forms with an army of demonic spirits.

Padre Agostino reported the following: “Satan would appear as a naked woman dancing lewdly, as his spiritual father, as his superior, as Pope Pius X, as his guardian angel, as St. Francis, as the Virgin Mary, and also in the form of his horrible self, accompanied by an army of demonic spirits. At times there were no visible apparitions, but he was beaten until he bled, tormented with deafening noises, and covered with spittle. He was able to free himself from the torments by calling on the name of Jesus.”⁴²⁸

Padre Pio frequently was physically assaulted by the devils

January 18th 1912: “It has been for several days that Barbablu comes with his satellites, in their own form of devils, and they beat me with clubs and iron devices, throwing me out of bed and dragging me around the room.”⁴²⁹

End of January, 1912: “Barbablu, with many of his peers, doesn’t stop beating me almost to death.”⁴³⁰

The devil had beaten him and twisted the bars

Padre Emilio da Matrice reported that in 1917, he was one of about sixteen students at the seraphic college in the convent of San Giovanni Rotondo. Padre Pio was their spiritual director, and he slept in the dormitory in a corner bed hidden by curtains. The curtains were held by sturdy iron bars planted in the wall, and one strong upright bar. “One night we all heard iron bars banging and echoing, and producing frightening sounds. We were paralyzed and hid under the blankets. In the morning the bars were on the floor twisted and bent in a terrifying manner. Only a giant could have done that. We asked Padre Pio what had happened. He said: ‘Let’s go to the choir and pray because our dear Lord is so good’. A few days later, Padre Pio told us that the devil had beaten him and twisted the bars

⁴²⁴ Preziuso, 2000, pp. 54-55

⁴²⁵ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 163-165

⁴²⁶ Parente, 2011a, p. 72

⁴²⁷ Cataneo, 1991, 165-6

⁴²⁸ Agostino, 2012, p. 51

⁴²⁹ Epistolario I, p. 252

⁴³⁰ Ibid., p. 255

because he was praying for one of us student friars who was struggling with a temptation against purity."⁴³¹

Right arm paralyzed

On August 9th 1912, Padre Pio wrote to Padre Agostino: "*Barbablu* prevents me from writing to you. Every time I try, I get a terrible headache, and my right arm becomes paralyzed so that I can't hold the pen in my hand."⁴³²

"The devils assaulted me with a terrible fracas."

In a letter to Padre Agostino on January 18th 1913, Padre Pio wrote: "It was late at night, and the devils assaulted me with a terrible fracas. They jumped on me, threw me to the floor, and beat me very hard, scattering pillows, books and chairs all over the room while screaming obscenities."⁴³³

"They found him beaten and prostrated."

Padre Paolino da Casacalenda reported that while in Foggia, Padre Pio usually did not join the friars for dinner. One evening, the friars heard a terrible noise coming from Padre Pio's room. They ran to him and found him beaten and prostrated. He was sweating so profusely that the undershirt looked like it had just been removed from a basin full of water.⁴³⁴

"Don't leave; otherwise the devils (*cosacci*) will come."

While Padre Pio was at the Foggia convent, Padre Paolino da Casacalenda was about to leave Padre Pio's cell after having a conversation with him. Padre Pio said to him: "Don't leave; otherwise the devils (*cosacci*) will come." He stayed a little longer and then left. But after he had taken just a few steps, he heard a terrible noise, and ran back. Padre Pio had been assaulted. He was pale and sweating profusely.⁴³⁵

Mons. Andrea D'Agostino runs away from the convent in Foggia

Padre Paolino reported that when Padre Pio was at the convent of Foggia, Mons. Andrea D'Agostino, Bishop of Ariano Irpino stayed overnight at the friary one evening. After dinner with the friars he heard "an infernal fracas" coming from Padre Pio's room. The bishop was so terrified that he left the convent on the spot.⁴³⁶

In the summer of 1964 "The devils tried to scratch my eyes out."

During the late evening of Sunday July 5th 1964, Padre Pio was in his room when he called out: "My brothers help me." When the friars arrived, they found Padre Pio lying on the floor bleeding from the nose and the forehead and with a number of wounds above his right eyebrow. He had been badly beaten by the devils.^{437 438 439 440}

⁴³¹ Bruno, 1970, pp. 151-153

⁴³² Epistolario I, p. 297

⁴³³ Ibid., p. 330

⁴³⁴ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 166-167

⁴³⁵ Convento Frati Minori, 2001, p. 144

⁴³⁶ da Casacalenda, 1978, pp. 54-57

⁴³⁷ Schug, 1987, pp. 72-73

⁴³⁸ Ingoldsby, 1978, pp. 114-115

⁴³⁹ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 170-172

⁴⁴⁰ Alberto, 2007, pp. 80-84

Bill Martin: "We had to call the doctor in at ten o' clock that night to put stitches in the wound. It was so deep he couldn't open his eyes." Padre Pio: "The devils tried to scratch my eyes out."⁴⁴¹

The devil played tricks on Padre Pio

"Just a blank piece of paper."

On December 3rd 1912, Padre Pio wrote to Padre Agostino: "I received your letter on November 29th. It was opened when the archpriest was with me. What did we find? Just a blank sheet of paper. If I didn't know the strange war of the *cosaccio*, I would ask you if there was any mistake on your side."^{442 443 444}

The blank letter has not been preserved but was seen by Padre Agostino, as he wrote in his diary.⁴⁴⁵

"The letter was all stained, and couldn't be read."

On November 6th 1912, Padre Agostino sent a letter written on both sides in French to Padre Pio. The letter was badly stained and was unreadable. The archpriest Salvatore Pannullo wrote in a sworn testimony on August 5th 1919: "I was present when this letter was opened. It was so stained that it couldn't be read at all. A Crucifix was placed on the letter; it was also sprinkled with holy water and the exorcisms were recited. Afterwards the letter could be read the way it is now. I called my niece Grazia Pannullo and she read the letter to me and to Padre Pio. She didn't know what we had done before calling her."⁴⁴⁶

A well-dressed devil confesses to Padre Pio

Padre Pio told Padre Tarcisio da Cervinara: "One morning a polite, well-dressed man came to confess. He enumerated the most horrible, disgusting, abominable sins. He justified every one of them with subtle argumentations. I thought: 'Who is this? Where does he come from?' I was very perplexed until a vivid interior light made me understand who was in front of me. At that point, I said firmly: 'Say long live Jesus.' As soon as I said those words, Satan disappeared in a flicker of flame, leaving after him an overwhelming stench."⁴⁴⁷

Padre Pio delivered people from the devil

Padre Pio went up to her and kicked her saying: "Go! Satan!"

In 1946 a woman from Bottegone had pains and swelling of the knees and legs, together with abdominal swelling. The doctors could offer no remedy. She went to Padre Pio for help. When she was at the confessional her body started to swell and she began yelling and screaming. Padre Pio went up to her and kicked her saying: "Go! Satan!" The woman fainted. When she recovered she realized that she was healthy and had been delivered from the devil.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴¹ Duchess Suzanne, 1968, p. 8

⁴⁴² Epistolario I, pp. 317-318

⁴⁴³ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 168-169

⁴⁴⁴ De Liso, 1962, p. 44

⁴⁴⁵ Epistolario I, Note 318

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid., Note 314

⁴⁴⁷ da Cervinara, 1993, pp. 47-48

⁴⁴⁸ Cataneo, 1991, p. 172

“This is not a thing for medicine.”

A boy in Milan was perfectly normal. Suddenly at the age of six years, he stopped speaking. Every therapy that was tried was unsuccessful. At the age of twelve, he was brought to Padre Pio. Padre Pio said: “This is not a thing for medicine.” He made the sign of the cross over the boy, and the boy immediately began to speak.⁴⁴⁹

Possessed Maria Palma Carboni

Maria Palma Carboni was a fifteen-year-old girl who was the victim of frighteningly severe diabolic possessions. No blessings could deliver her from the terrifying torment. On June 19th 1952, she was brought to Padre Pio, who rested his hands upon her head. At the moment that he touched her, the girl immediately fell into a swoon. After a few minutes she revived and was free of the diabolic possession.⁴⁵⁰

⁴⁴⁹ Schug, 1987, p. 75

⁴⁵⁰ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 257

10 Purgatory: Padre Pio's deep knowledge, frequent sightings. Two Year Reprieves

"You will be surprised to find in Paradise souls that you'd never expected to be there." (Padre Pio to Padre Alessio) ⁴⁵¹

"More souls of the dead from Purgatory than of the living climb this mountain to attend my Masses and seek my prayers." (Padre Pio to Padre Joseph Pius) ^{452 453 454}

"There has been no other saint who, every time he was asked, would tell if a soul had been saved, if had gone to Paradise or Purgatory, and say the day and hour of the liberation." (Cleonice Morcaldi) ⁴⁵⁵

"Padre Pio had an exact knowledge of the state of the souls after death, including the duration of the pain until they reached total purification." (Prof. Gerardo De Caro) ⁴⁵⁶

Padre Pio knew firsthand the prayers and sufferings of the souls in Purgatory

Padre Pio was asked if he suffered like the souls in Purgatory. He replied: "Yes. The souls in Purgatory don't suffer any more than I do. I am sure that I am not wrong in this."⁴⁵⁷

To Gerardo De Caro: "We need to pray for the souls in Purgatory. We have yet to comprehend how much they can do for us, through the gratitude they have for those who pray for them!"⁴⁵⁸

To Padre Alessio: "The prayers of the souls in Purgatory are much more efficacious before God, because they pray in the midst of their suffering."⁴⁵⁹

On November 29th 1910, Padre Pio wrote to Padre Benedetto: "I am asking your permission to offer myself to the Lord as a victim for the poor sinners and the souls in Purgatory."⁴⁶⁰

Padre Pio offered the following reflections on the efficacy of prayers for souls in purgatory: "The souls in Purgatory pray for us, and their prayers are even more effective than ours, because they are accompanied by their suffering. So, let's pray for them, and let's pray them to pray for us."

"The souls in Purgatory repay the prayers that we say for them."

"When we pray for the souls in Purgatory we will always get something back."⁴⁶¹

In 1945 Fra' Modestino asked Padre Pio whether a fire in a hearth could be compared to the flames of Purgatory. He replied: "They are like fresh water compared to boiling water."⁴⁶²

⁴⁵¹ Parente, 2011a, pp. 110-111

⁴⁵² Schug, 1987, p. 77

⁴⁵³ Franciscan Friars, 2009, p. 173

⁴⁵⁴ Parente, 2011a, p. 209

⁴⁵⁵ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 180

⁴⁵⁶ Parente, 2011a, pp. 108-109

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 259

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 109-110

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 110

⁴⁶⁰ Epistolario I, p. 206

⁴⁶¹ Parente, 2011a, p. 110

⁴⁶² Ibid., pp. 95-96

Padre Pio knew if a dead person was saved

“The account is settled.”

Romolo da San Marco in Lamis reports: “I asked Padre Pio if my grandmother, who had died suddenly, was saved. He answered: ‘The account is settled.’ Before he replied, he had turned away, whispering in a very low voice, as if he was talking to another person.”⁴⁶³

“Yes, they are.”

Padre Paolo Covino asked Padre Pio on October 18th 1968: “Are my parents saved?” Padre Pio answered: “Yes, they are.”⁴⁶⁴

“Julius Fine is saved.”

In 1965, Florence Fine Herman asked Padre Pio to pray for her father who had motor neuron disease. He promised to take him under his protection. He was a devout Jew. He died two years later. She was told by friends that without baptism one cannot be saved. She went back to Padre Pio with a heavy heart. Taking courage, she asked him: “Where is my father?” Padre Pio replied: “Julius Fine is saved. But we need to pray a lot for him.”⁴⁶⁵

“I can do it myself.”

Annita Lodi testified that she said to Padre Pio after confession: “Tomorrow is the feast day of St. Francis. Please ask him to go to Purgatory and free the souls of my parents.” Padre Pio replied: “I can do it myself.”⁴⁶⁶

“He is saved.”

A woman went to Padre Pio to ask after her brother who had committed suicide after running into financial difficulties. She went to his Mass but was unable to speak with him. She sat in the church, crying and praying while Padre Pio was confessing. At a certain moment she was nudged by the person next to her, who said: “Padre Pio is calling you.” She turned towards the confessional. Padre Pio was making a sign to her with his hand that she should approach the confessional. She did, and knelt in front of him. Padre Pio said: “Don’t worry, stay calm, he is saved.”⁴⁶⁷

“Your father is saved.”

Salvatore D’Apolito returned to San Giovanni Rotondo with his daughter Nunzia in 1938 after having spent 22 years in the United States. They visited Padre Pio and Padre Alberto D’Apolito, who was the son of Salvatore. Some months later in February 1939, Salvatore developed pneumonia and died within few hours. Padre Pio told Padre Alberto: “Have courage, be calm, your father is saved.”⁴⁶⁸

“She certainly went without any stop from here to Paradise”.

Elena Bandini, from Borgo San Lorenzo in the province of Florence, had been very active in the Franciscan apostolate in the Mugello area. Padre Pio wrote twenty-four letters to her. She moved permanently to San Giovanni Rotondo in 1936. She helped the church, the monastery, and the local people of San Giovanni Rotondo for many years.

⁴⁶³ Castelli, 2011, p. 180

⁴⁶⁴ Covino, 2007, pp. 193-194

⁴⁶⁵ Parente, 2011a, pp. 159-161

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 231

⁴⁶⁷ Winowska, 1988, pp. 197-199

⁴⁶⁸ Alberto, 2007, pp. 105-107

When she died in 1955, John McCaffery told Padre Pio: "She certainly went without any stop from here to Paradise". Padre Pio with two great tears rolling down his cheeks: "Oh! Without stop at all!"⁴⁶⁹

"He is up there"

Nina Campanile's brother Pasqualino died in combat on September 26th 1916. Her mother sent Nina with her teacher Vittorina Ventrella to ask Padre Pio if Pasqualino was saved. "Yes, he is saved, but he needs your prayers." She asked again at Christmas in 1918. Padre Pio said: "He is up there!"⁴⁷⁰

"This morning, during Mass, your mother flew to Paradise."

Cleonice Morcaldi's mother, Carmela Fiorentino, died on April 2nd 1937. On May 4th 1937, Padre Pio told Cleonice; "This morning, during Mass, your mother flew to Paradise."⁴⁷¹

Padre Pio frequently saw souls from Purgatory

"I have seen so many of them!"

In 1922 Bishop Alberto Costa asked Padre Pio if he had ever seen a soul in Purgatory. Padre Pio replied: "I have seen so many of them that they don't scare me anymore."⁴⁷²

"He will not bother you any more."

In 1945, Padre Francesco Napolitano reported that when Fra' Pietro entered his cell one night, he saw a young friar sitting at his desk, with his head bowed down as though he was meditating. When he asked who he was, the young friar disappeared. Fra' Pietro was terrified and ran to Padre Pio's room. Padre Pio accompanied him back to his cell and said: "That young friar is a poor novice who is serving his Purgatory in this cell. But don't worry, he will not bother you any more and you will never see him again."⁴⁷³

"They are two poor friars in Purgatory."

Padre Francesco Napolitano reported what he had heard from Grazio, Padre Pio's father. Grazio went to spend a few days with his son in 1926. He was assigned cell number 10. When he tried to enter the cell, two friars stood in front of the door and would not let him in. He explained who he was, but to no avail. When he took a step forward in order to forcefully enter, they vanished. He was terrified, and went to Padre Pio. "Dad, don't be agitated. They are two poor friars in Purgatory. They have to serve their Purgatory at the spot where they disobeyed the rule of St. Francis."⁴⁷⁴

"Viva Padre Pio"

One night in 1944, the friars heard loud voices coming from downstairs saying "Viva Padre Pio". The superior Padre Raffaele da S. Elia a Pianisi told the doorkeeper Fra Gerardo da Deliceto to escort the people out and to lock the door securely. Fra Gerardo went downstairs, but there was nobody to be seen. When he checked, the door was double locked as it was supposed to be. He went back to report on what he had seen. Padre

⁴⁶⁹ McCaffery, 1978, pp. 74-76

⁴⁷⁰ Parente, 2011a, pp. 151-156

⁴⁷¹ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 126

⁴⁷² Parente, 2011a, p. 129

⁴⁷³ Ibid., pp. 169-172

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., pp. 165-167

Raffaele was puzzled and went straight to Padre Pio asking if he knew anything about what was going on.⁴⁷⁵

Padre Pio said to him: "Oh! They were a group of soldiers who had died on the battlefield, and came here to thank me for my prayers for their salvation."⁴⁷⁶

"My great-great grandfather"

One day Padre said to his doctor: "I'm praying for the good death of my great-great grandfather". "But he died more than one hundred years ago!" replied the doctor. Padre Pio: "Remember that for God there is no past and no future, and everything is present. So God made use at that time of the prayers I'm saying now."⁴⁷⁷

Pietro Di Mauro: "If you say Mass for me tomorrow, I will go to Paradise."

In 1917, Padre Pio was in the room with the common fireplace at the convent when he saw an old man sitting near him. The man said: "I am Pietro Di Mauro, nicknamed Precoco. I died in cell number 4 in this friary on September 18th 1886, when a fire broke out. The Lord has let me come to you from Purgatory. If you say the Mass for me tomorrow, I will go to Paradise." ^{478 479 480}

Padre Pio reported: "I was agitated. I told the superior Father Paolino da Casacalenda what had happened and asked to celebrate the Mass for Pietro." Father Paolino gave his permission. He later went to consult the registry at City Hall. On that date in 1886, at which time the convent had been expropriated by the government and was used as a nursing home, a disabled man by that name had died by smoke inhalation due to a fire in the building.^{481 482 483 484}

"Tomorrow my Mass will be for you. Now go away and never come back."

One evening Padre Pio was praying alone in church. He heard crashing sounds, like candles falling to the ground. He got up and went to the communion rail. He was greeted by a young friar who he had never seen before. The friar said: "I am a Capuchin novice, and I am from Purgatory doing penance for lack of diligence in my work in the church." Padre Pio said: "Tomorrow my Mass will be for you. Now go away and never come back." Padre Emanuele happened to pass by. He and Padre Pio went to have a closer look. Behind the altar, they found many large candles on the floor. All were broken.^{485 486 487}

"Do you think I cannot come back from Heaven?"

Padre Costantino Capobianco told Padre Pio: "I want to die before you do so you can assist me." Padre Pio: "Do you think I cannot come back from Heaven?"⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁷⁵ Capuano, 2012, p. 296

⁴⁷⁶ Parente, 2011a, p. 56

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 103-104

⁴⁷⁸ Franciscan Friars, 2009, p. 172

⁴⁷⁹ Convento Frati Minori, 2001, p. 162

⁴⁸⁰ Parente, 2011a, pp. 129-134

⁴⁸¹ Capuano, 2012, pp. 294-296

⁴⁸² Cataneo, 1991, pp. 149-151

⁴⁸³ Alberto, 2007, pp. 88-90

⁴⁸⁴ da Ripabottoni, 2010, pp. 256-257

⁴⁸⁵ Schug, 1987, pp. 103-104

⁴⁸⁶ Cataneo, 1991, p. 151

⁴⁸⁷ Covino, 2007, pp. 41-42

⁴⁸⁸ Capobianco, 2006, pp. 206-207

"I came to thank you for your prayers."

Padre Giuseppantonio da San Marco in Larnis was ill in the Foggia convent. On December 29th 1936, Padre Pio was asked by Padre Giacinto da Sant'Elia a Pianisi to pray for him because his health was deteriorating. At about 2 AM on December 30th somebody knocked at Padre Pio's door. Padre Giuseppantonio entered the room. Padre Pio asked him: "How are you doing? They told me that you were gravely ill and now I see you here." Padre Giuseppantonio: "I'm well. All my suffering has ended, and I came to thank you for your prayers." Then he disappeared. In the morning, Padre Pio told Padre Bernardo da Alpicella what had happened. Nobody knew yet that Padre Giuseppantonio had died. They later found out that he had died precisely the same time that he had visited Padre Pio.^{489 490 491}

"Those are voices of the angel taking souls from Purgatory to Paradise!"⁴⁹²

One evening in the convent of San Giovanni Rotondo, the friars heard music and a choir singing. Nobody in the convent could possibly be performing at that time of night. They went to Padre Pio who was absorbed in prayer, and asked him about it. "So, what? Why are you marveling? Those are the voices of the angel taking the souls from Purgatory to Paradise!"⁴⁹³

"They came to thank me."

A friar testified: "We were all in the dining room when Padre Pio suddenly got up and walked at steady pace to the door of the convent. He opened it and started having a conversation. The two friars that went with him didn't see anybody and began to wonder whether something might be wrong with Padre Pio. On the way back to the dining area, Padre Pio explained. "Don't be concerned. I was talking to some souls who were on their way from Purgatory to Paradise. They came to thank me for remembering them today in the Mass."⁴⁹⁴

"He is in Paradise."

Carmela Marocchino's brother Padre Vittore da Canosa died suddenly on January 29th 1958. Carmela asked Padre Pio why the death was so sudden. "Do you know what Jesus did with your brother? Jesus went into the garden and there were many flowers, and one was more beautiful than the others. He leaned on the most beautiful and picked it." Carmela asked: "Is he saved?" Padre Pio replied: "Yes, but we need to pray." On July 29th she asked once again if he was saved. "My daughter, we priests are more responsible before God. Let us continue to pray." On December 29th 1958, she asked again where her brother was. Padre Pio answered: "He is in Paradise."⁴⁹⁵

Padre Pio obtained "Two Year Reprieves"

With Padre Pio, at times a grave physical illness disappeared for a period of two or three years, sometimes longer. People called it "The two years reprieve". They were given time to organize their life and prepare for the final journey.⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁸⁹ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 241-242

⁴⁹⁰ Parente, 2011a, p. 177-179

⁴⁹¹ Agostino, 2012, p. 132 (footnote)

⁴⁹² Parente, 1994, p. 56

⁴⁹³ Ibid., p. 56

⁴⁹⁴ Franciscan Friars, 2009, p. 172

⁴⁹⁵ Parente, 2011a, pp. 156-158

⁴⁹⁶ Ruffin, 1991, p. 340

“Soon your body will be healed.”

Dr. Francesco Ricciardi from San Giovanni Rotondo was an outspoken atheist and supporter of attacks on Padre Pio. In the fall of 1928, he was diagnosed with advanced stomach cancer. His condition was deemed hopeless, and by December he was near death. Padre Pio went to visit him, and spent some time alone with him. No one knows what occurred between the two men, except that Ricciardi confessed and received Holy Communion. When the family was readmitted to the room, Padre Pio told the doctor: “Your soul is healed, and soon your body will be healed as well.” Within three days, all signs of the cancer had disappeared. Dr. Ricciardi lived for nearly four more years and died a practicing Catholic.^{497 498 499}

Playwright Luigi Antonelli

Playwright Luigi Antonelli had cancer of the face, neck, and jaw. The doctors told him that he would die within three months. He confessed to Padre Pio. When he returned home, he refused surgery, felt “miraculously cured”, and worked intensely on several literary projects until his death, three years later.^{500 501}

“I wanted five years. Padre Pio obtained nine. So I am grateful.”

Giuseppe Scatigna of Palermo was being treated at Casa Sollievo in 1968, just before the death of Padre Pio. He had terminal cancer with metastatic lymph-glandular melanoma. The cancer was so advanced that he was told that he was unlikely to live for more than 48 hours. His wife obtained from the friars a piece of a linen cloth that had been used by Padre Pio on his side wound. The two of them prayed that he might have five more years of life so that he could continue to look after their adopted daughter. Giuseppe had a dream of Padre Pio trying to lift an enormous stone while young people stood around laughing at him. He felt immediately better. The following morning, the doctor on ward rounds asked him how he was feeling. He said: “I feel perfectly well.” He looked normal to the doctor. All the analyses and tests performed were negative. A series of X rays revealed no trace of cancer. He was discharged, completely healed. It was November 23th 1968, thirty days after Padre Pio’s death.

He returned to Sicily and was in good health for almost ten years. Before he died he said: “I wanted five years so that our daughter could grow up. Padre Pio obtained nine. So I am grateful.” He died a happy death.⁵⁰²

They died grateful that they had been given time to sort out their lives.

John and Elle Lynch lived in Canterbury, England. In 1981 they were expected to die in a matter of days. John had terminal congestive heart failure, and Ellen had advanced pancreatic cancer. Padre Pio appeared to John and both husband and wife recovered almost instantaneously. The doctors were amazed and begun to doubt their diagnoses, but they had documentation of the tests done for John, and the exploratory surgery for Ellen. For the next two years they lived extremely well and were united to the Roman Catholic

⁴⁹⁷ Cataneo, 1991, p. 126

⁴⁹⁸ Napolitano, 1979, pp. 142-144

⁴⁹⁹ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 224-225

⁵⁰⁰ Cataneo, 1991, pp. 135-136

⁵⁰¹ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 242-243

⁵⁰² Schug, 1987, pp. 7-13

Church. When the original diseases recurred, they died grateful that they had been given time to sort out their lives.⁵⁰³

The man lived eight years more.

Padre Marcellino Lasenzaniro was chaplain at a hospital in Milan. He would bring Communion to a hospitalized man who was told by the doctors that he had terminal throat cancer and needed surgery. The man left the hospital and sought Padre Pio's advice. He had visited Padre Pio in the past, but Padre Pio he had been harsh with him. This time Padre Pio said: "You must not have the operation. You must not be touched." The man lived for another eight years. He would often say: "I have received two miracles from Padre Pio. The second one is that I have lived for more years, but the first miracle that I received from him was my conversion."⁵⁰⁴

"He told me that he will come for me on the fifth of February."

A man in Rome had been suffering day and night from terminal cancer. In November 1972, and with various family members around him, he began to shout: "Send that friar away. Don't you see him? He is a Capuchin friar with a white beard. He is telling me to go with him. I do not want to go. He told me that he would be coming for me on the 5th of February. He is leaving now." The family members thought that the illness and the medications had made him hallucinate. But he soon recovered. He recognized Padre Pio as the friar who had visited him after seeing his photograph. Thereafter, he went to church every day and spent all his time praying. At the beginning of February 1973, he suffered a relapse. He died serenely on the 5th February with the name of Jesus on his lips.⁵⁰⁵

"Padre Pio has told me that he is coming to take me to my Lady very soon."

Brian John, a young child from Liverpool, was dying of leukemia. The parents were non-practicing members of the Church of England. They wanted to pray and asked a Roman Catholic friend for help. "Pray to Padre Pio." "Who is Padre Pio?" "Just pray." They prayed to Padre Pio about whom they knew nothing. Two weeks later Brian asked his mom: "Did you see the man who came to see me last night?" Brian was visited over several nights. He told his parents: "He said that his name is Padre Pio. He has a long brown dress on, and he has holes in his hands and feet. Those holes don't hurt him anymore." While Brian was telling them of his experience, his parents smelled a wonderful fragrance that permeated the entire house.

One evening the child said to his mother: "You have to ask God for another little boy. Padre Pio has told me that he is coming to take me to my Lady very soon." A few days later, the child deteriorated and was taken to the hospital, where he died peacefully.⁵⁰⁶

"Carletto, the Lord has already established the date of our death, but I'm saying a special prayer to add one more year to the time allotted to you."

Dr. Karl Kisvarday, administrator of Casa Sollievo della Sofferenza reported that Padre Pio told him: "Carletto, the Lord has already established the date of our death, but I'm saying a special prayer to add one more year to the time allotted to you." In 1959, Dr. Kisvarday was brought to the intensive care ward in a coma. He remained unconscious for three days, assisted by his housekeeper Paola Novak. One night, Paola left the bedside and returned home in a state of exhaustion. At the doctor's bedside were the nurse Margherita

⁵⁰³ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 341-342

⁵⁰⁴ Lasenzaniro, 2007, pp. 146-147

⁵⁰⁵ Ruffin, 1991, p. 380

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 380-381

and a young nun. The nurse and the nun stepped out of the room for less than a minute. As they returned, they saw a monk leaving the room. They went in together. The patient suddenly exclaimed: "Oh, what a beautiful perfume!" "It's the alcohol, doctor" said Margherita, who was preparing the hypodermic for an injection. "No, no, it's the perfume of Padre Pio. He came. We talked. And he left." Dr. Kisvarday died a little less than a year late. But he had his extra year of perfect health.⁵⁰⁷

⁵⁰⁷ Duchess Suzanne, 1983, pp. 120-121

11 Padre Pio and the Virgin Mary. Prayer and the Rosary. Lourdes and Fatima

Padre Pio had frequent heavenly visions of the Virgin Mary

Padre Onorato asked Padre Pio if he ever saw the Madonna. Padre Pio replied:

"She comes to me whenever I need her."⁵⁰⁸

Padre Tarcisio: "Does Our Lady ever come to your cell?" Padre Pio: "You should rather ask me if she ever leaves my cell."⁵⁰⁹

Padre Marcellino: "Padre Pio solves everything with the help of our Lady, or by letting her solve it."⁵¹⁰

On several occasions Padre Pio confided to his intimates that the Blessed Virgin remained beside him while he heard confessions.⁵¹¹

To Enzo Bertani: "Every morning the Virgin Mary is at the altar together with Jesus or the Seraphic Father Saint Francis."⁵¹²

The very last word spoken by Padre Pio was: "Mary!"⁵¹³

"I saw clearly the Heavenly Mother with the baby Jesus in her arms."

Padre Pio wrote on August 15th 1929, feast of the Assumption: "This morning I approached the altar with physical pains and internal anguish. I felt as though I was dying and was permeated by a deadly sadness. At the moment of consuming the Sacred Host I saw clearly the Heavenly Mother with Baby Jesus in her arms. They both told me: "Calm down! We are here with you. You belong to us and we are yours." From that moment on, I felt drowned in an indescribable sea of sweetness and love."⁵¹⁴

"Don't you see the Madonna?"

Padre Agostino was in Padre Pio's room, when Padre Pio asked: "Don't you see the Madonna?" To Agostino's negative answer Padre Pio replied: "You deny it out of holy humility!"^{515 516}

"Don't you see the Madonna lighting up the cell?"

One evening Dr. Kisvarday was talking with Padre Pio in his cell when the light went off. He got up to get a candle. "Where are you going? There is so much light. We don't need a candle. Don't you see the Madonna lighting up the cell?" Dr. Kisvarday later commented: "I didn't see the Madonna, I saw only pitch dark."

⁵⁰⁸ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 136

⁵⁰⁹ Iasenzaniro, 2007, p. 661

⁵¹⁰ Ibid., p. 664

⁵¹¹ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 136

⁵¹² Iasenzaniro, 2007, p. 665

⁵¹³ Ingoldsby, 1978, 136

⁵¹⁴ da Riese, 2010, pp. 474-475

⁵¹⁵ Agostino, 2012, p. 53

⁵¹⁶ da Ripabottoni, 2010, p. 249

“Our Lady always kept me company during Mass.”

By decree of the Holy Office, Padre Pio said Mass alone from 1921 to 1923. Years later, Padre Pio told Padre Eusebio: “I was never alone. Our Lady always kept me company during Mass.”⁵¹⁷

“I see two mothers.”

While sitting in his armchair few minutes before he died, Padre Pio said: “I see two mothers.” His mother had died many years earlier. He was seeing the Virgin Mary and Mamma Peppa, his birth mother, together.⁵¹⁸

Bilocation: Padre Pio visited Lourdes without ever leaving the convent

“What dream?”

One day, Padre Pio described the sanctuary of Lourdes in perfect detail to Padre Rosario di Aliminusa. He had never been there. Padre Rosario said: “You must have seen it in a dream!” Padre Pio: “What dream? I was not sleeping. I was awake!”⁵¹⁹

“I have been to Lourdes many times.”

To Padre Onorato who was going on a pilgrimage to Lourdes: “I have been to Lourdes many times. You don't need a car or a train, there are other means too.”⁵²⁰

“I go to Lourdes every night.”

To Padre Alessio: “I don't have to go to Lourdes. I go there every night. I see Our Lady of Lourdes every night.”⁵²¹

Padre Pio on prayer

“We seek God in books, but it is in prayer that we find Him.”^{522 523}

“Those who pray a lot will be saved. Those who pray a little risk being damned. Those who don't pray don't need the devil to take them to hell; they will get there on their own legs.”⁵²⁴

“Prayer is the key that opens the heart of God.”⁵²⁵ “Prayer must be persistent. Persistence denotes faith.”⁵²⁶ “Prayer is the best weapon we possess.”^{527 528} “Prayers will never be

⁵¹⁷ lasenzaniro, 2007, p. 668

⁵¹⁸ da Riese, 2010, p. 488

⁵¹⁹ Ibid., p. 477

⁵²⁰ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 230

⁵²¹ Schug, 1987, p. 59

⁵²² De Liso, 1962, p. 547

⁵²³ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 25

⁵²⁴ lasenzaniro, 2007, p. 521

⁵²⁵ da Ripabottoni, 2010, p. 372

⁵²⁶ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 28

⁵²⁷ De Liso 1962, p. 554

⁵²⁸ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 24

wasted."⁵²⁹ "I want to save souls by continuous prayer." ⁵³⁰ "I will never tire of praying to Jesus."⁵³¹

Padre Pio on agitation

"Pray, hope, don't get agitated. Agitation doesn't help at all. God is merciful and will listen to your prayer."⁵³² (*"Prega, spera, non agitarti. L'agitazione non giova a nulla. Dio è misericordioso ed ascolterà la tua preghiera."*)

"The more you get agitated, the sooner Providence will withdraw its arms from you." "Anxiety makes us run to the point where we trip over and fall." "Agitation never comes from God."⁵³³

Padre Pio called the Rosary: "My weapon"

Padre Pio would often say: "This is my weapon. With this, one wins the battles."⁵³⁴

On one occasion when Padre Pio was with Padre Onorato Marcucci, he grabbed the Rosary that he had placed on the nightstand just a few seconds before and said: "Give me my weapon."⁵³⁵

Padre Fernando da Riese reported: "The Rosary was Padre Pio's favored prayer. He prayed it many times a day, decade after decade. He always had a rosary wrapped around his hand or his arm, as though it was a jewel or a shield. He had other rosaries under the pillow and on the nightstand. He called the rosary his "weapon". He had made a resolution years earlier to say no less than five complete rosaries every day."⁵³⁶

Padre Pio's recitation of the Rosary

At 9 pm on February 6th 1954, Padre Pio said to father Carmelo: "I still have two rosaries to pray today. I have said only 34 so far. Then I will go to bed."⁵³⁷

Answering Padre Michelangelo: "Today I have recited 32 or 33 rosaries - perhaps one or two more."

When Padre Mariano Paladino da Magliano Santa Croce asked: "How many Rosaries do you pray each day", Padre Pio replied: "About 30. Maybe a few more, but never less." Padre Mariano exclaimed: "How do you do it?" to which Padre Pio replied "What do you think nights are for?"

When asked the same question by don Pierino Galeone, Padre Pio replied: "Between 15 and 20."⁵³⁸

⁵²⁹ Ibid., p. 28

⁵³⁰ Ibid., p. 28

⁵³¹ Ibid., p. 29

⁵³² Ibid., p. 24

⁵³³ Ibid., p. 200

⁵³⁴ Napolitano 1979, p. 217

⁵³⁵ Di Flumeri, 1996, II, p. 519

⁵³⁶ da Riese, 2010, p. 486

⁵³⁷ Napolitano, 1979, pp. 222-223

⁵³⁸ Galeone, 2009, p. 44

One morning after Mass at around 7 am, Padre Pio asked Lucia Pennelli: "How many rosaries have you said so far today?" "Two" she replied. Padre Pio: "I have already said seven."

On another occasion at about mid-day, Padre Pio said to Lucietta Pennelli: "Today I have already recited 16 complete Rosaries."

When asked by Padre Tarcisio Zullo how many rosaries he said every day, Padre Pio replied: "If it is not a good day, about 30."⁵³⁹ ⁵⁴⁰

Padre Alessio Parente asked Padre Pio why he would constantly say the rosary and no other prayers. Padre Pio: "Because the Madonna never refuses me anything that I ask through the prayer of the rosary."

⁵³⁹ Pena 2013, p. 27

⁵⁴⁰ di Flumeri, 1996, II, p. 624

12 Padre Pio was everyone's father, the good shepherd, at the door of Heaven

Padre Pio was everyone's father

"I belong entirely to everyone. Everyone can say: Padre Pio is mine."⁵⁴¹

"I belong entirely to everyone. Because of it I suffer immensely for everyone."⁵⁴²

"I am all for everyone, and there is still a little bit left over."⁵⁴³

"Every single person can say: Padre Pio is all mine."⁵⁴⁴

"When a soul approaches me, I take it. When I have taken a soul, I never let it go."⁵⁴⁵

"If a soul slips from me and goes away, I pray and suffer for her return, and when she has returned I retake her, and don't let her run away again."⁵⁴⁶

"If one of my spiritual children ever goes astray I shall leave my flock and seek him out."⁵⁴⁷

"It is true I make my penitents sweat blood. But I also add my own blood."⁵⁴⁸

"I love my spiritual children as much as my own soul and even more."⁵⁴⁹

"I can hit my children. I want to bring them up fast with blows, but woe that lay a hand on them."⁵⁵⁰

"How come at times you are a bit harsh?" Padre Pio: "To destroy the old and insert the new."⁵⁵¹

"I work to give my children the heritage."⁵⁵²

"When I have lifted a soul, I don't let it fall down again."⁵⁵³

⁵⁴¹ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 174

⁵⁴² Epistolario I, p. 1153

⁵⁴³ lasenzaniro, 2007, p. 553

⁵⁴⁴ da Ripabottoni, 2010, p. 333

⁵⁴⁵ D'Apolito, 2010, p. 149

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 149

⁵⁴⁷ Alberto 2007, p. 161

⁵⁴⁸ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 14

⁵⁴⁹ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 174

⁵⁵⁰ Duchess Suzanne, 1968, p. 19

⁵⁵¹ da Ripabottoni, 2010, p. 334

⁵⁵² Morcaldi, 2013, p. 181

⁵⁵³ Winkowska, 1988, p. 47

"When the Lord entrusts a soul to me, I place it on my shoulder and never let it go."⁵⁵⁴

"After I die I will be closer to you than I am now. I will watch over you better, because I won't be suffering there."⁵⁵⁵

"When I am in heaven I will be able to do more".⁵⁵⁶

At the door of Heaven

"I can forget myself, but not my children; I tell you that when the Lord will call me, I will stay at the door of paradise and I will tell Him: 'Lord, I do not enter before I see that all my children have entered.'"

Cleonice Morcaldi asked Padre Pio: "*Did you really say that?*" Padre Pio: "I made this proposal to the Lord. I don't know if He accepts it."⁵⁵⁷

"I have made a pact with the Lord: I will take my place at the gate to Paradise, but I shall not enter until I have seen the last of my spiritual children enter."^{558 559 560}

⁵⁵⁴ Alberto, 2007, p. 161

⁵⁵⁵ lasenzaniro, 2007, p. 651

⁵⁵⁶ Franciscan Friars, 2009, xii

⁵⁵⁷ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 81

⁵⁵⁸ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 175

⁵⁵⁹ Franciscan Friars, 2009, p. 172

⁵⁶⁰ Parente, 2011a, p. 216

13 Padre Pio and the Catholic Church: “Always obedient to our gentle Mother”

Padre Marcellino: “By his example Padre Pio invited every priest to hold in high esteem the Eucharist, Confession, and obedience to the Church.”

Rev. Bernard Ruffin: “Padre Pio is certainly one of the Roman Catholic Church’s best “advertisements”⁵⁶¹

Padre Pio suffered false accusations of sexual misconduct, and was misunderstood throughout his whole life, even by the highest Church authorities.⁵⁶²

Padre Pio never held any animosity towards the people that falsely accused him.⁵⁶³

“The thought of revenge has never crossed my mind. At most, I sometimes told the Lord that if a lashing was necessary to convert them, to go ahead, so long as they were saved.”⁵⁶⁴

Padre Pio on the Church

“Always stay close to the Catholic Church.”⁵⁶⁵

“Only the Catholic Church possesses Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.”⁵⁶⁶

“Thank God a hundred times a day for being a child of the Church.”⁵⁶⁷

“Don’t do anything without the consent and approval of bishops and priests. Do everything by mutual consent, and obey.”⁵⁶⁸

“The hand of the Church is gentle even when it strikes us, for it is always our mother’s hand.”⁵⁶⁹

“The severity of the Church is always necessary in order to clarify our ideas. Otherwise there would be chaos.”⁵⁷⁰

“I would give my life a thousand times for the Pope and for the Church.”⁵⁷¹

⁵⁶¹ Franciscan Friars, 2009, p. 4

⁵⁶² Ibid., 13

⁵⁶³ Ibid., 13

⁵⁶⁴ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 179

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 161

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 161

⁵⁶⁷ Epistolario III, p. 839

⁵⁶⁸ Giannuzzo, 2012, p. 331

⁵⁶⁹ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 121

⁵⁷⁰ Ibid., 124

⁵⁷¹ Franciscan Friars, 2009, 60

Francesco Morcaldi: "Padre Pio submitted completely to all the Church's orders with a humility that belongs only to the saints."⁵⁷²

When Prof. Enrico Medi was about to go to the Vatican to meet with Pope Pius XII, Padre Pio said to him: "Tell the Pope that I offer my life for him with immense joy. Tell him that I pray constantly"⁵⁷³

Enrico Medi: "Padre Pio had complete allegiance to the Church. When the Church asked him not to celebrate Mass in public, he did not celebrate in public. When the Church asked him for solitary silence, he entered into solitary silence. When the Church asked him to talk, he talked; to pray, he prayed; to celebrate, he celebrated; to disappear, he disappeared."⁵⁷⁴

Mary Ingoldsby: "Padre Pio's first prayer in the morning was for the reigning pontiff. He would not listen to even the most innocent joke about the pope's authority or the authority of any superior."⁵⁷⁵

Padre Ferdinando da Riese: "Padre Pio was not a preacher. Nevertheless, his obedience and allegiance to the Church have been his longest sermon, and the most convincing."⁵⁷⁶

Padre Pio told Katharina Tangari: "Every Christian denomination in the world feeds off the Catholic Church. Our Holy Catholic Church is like a great and extremely precious unpolished diamond from which every so often, somebody takes a particle and polishes it – not without the help of the evil one – so that it begins to shine better than the great unpolished diamond. And this shine draws men, it dazzles them and deceives them so that the particle necessarily is worn out and comes to nothing. This is the game of deception, which appears and reappears with time. Jesus warned us to watch out for it."⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷² da Riese, 2010, p. 494

⁵⁷³ Ibid., p. 490

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 492

⁵⁷⁵ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 122

⁵⁷⁶ da Riese, 2010, p. 495

⁵⁷⁷ Tangari, 1996, p. 60

14 Padre Pio: His life and mission, his blood, his suffering, the Heavenly secrets

"I'm a mystery to myself."^{578 579 580}

*"Many secrets of my life will only be revealed up there."*⁵⁸¹

*"One day men will doubt that I existed."*⁵⁸²

His Mission

"The Lord gave me a great mission that is known only to Him and me."⁵⁸³

"My mission is that of saving souls."⁵⁸⁴

"My true mission will begin after my death."^{585 586}

"I live only to serve the Heavenly Father: I do not live for myself: only for Him."⁵⁸⁷

Who am I?

"I am a priest who prays."⁵⁸⁸

"I am a poor friar who prays."⁵⁸⁹

"I want to be only a poor friar who prays."^{590 591}

"I am the torment of souls. I am a devouring fire, burning everything inside me."⁵⁹²

"Among you, I am your brother. On the Altar, I am your victim. In the confessional, I am your judge."⁵⁹³

The Victim of Love

"I am devoured by the love for God by the love for the neighbor."⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁷⁸ Epistolario I, p. 769

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., 800

⁵⁸⁰ Galeone, 2009, p. 8

⁵⁸¹ Morcaldi, 2013, 144

⁵⁸² Schug, 1987, p. 78

⁵⁸³ Morcaldi, 2013, 180

⁵⁸⁴ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 9

⁵⁸⁵ Ingoldsby, 1975, p. 23

⁵⁸⁶ Duchess Suanne, 1968, p. 21

⁵⁸⁷ Epistolario I, p. 497

⁵⁸⁸ Winkowska, 1988, p. 154

⁵⁸⁹ da Ripabottoni, 1999, p. 24

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid., 36

⁵⁹¹ di Flumeri, 1996, I, 2, p. 1938

⁵⁹² Morcaldi, 2013, p. 50

⁵⁹³ Chiron, 1999, p. 237

⁵⁹⁴ Epistolario I, p. 1247

"I am only sure of one thing: that my heart loves a lot. It is made to love."⁵⁹⁵

"I offer myself as a victim for everyone."⁵⁹⁶

"I love everybody, even if there is always a small difference."⁵⁹⁷

"I want to save myself at any price."⁵⁹⁸

"From my birth, the Lord showed me signs of a very special predilection."⁵⁹⁹

"The Lord has chosen me, despite my faults, to help Him in the great endeavor of saving humanity."⁶⁰⁰

Heavenly secrets

On God

"God is always fixed in my mind and imprinted in my heart."⁶⁰¹

"Time spent for the glory of God is never wasted."⁶⁰²

"Do not start any activity without first offering it to God."⁶⁰³

"One day the slightest transgression of God's law will be considered."⁶⁰⁴

"Always remember that God sees everything."⁶⁰⁵

"Before going to sleep examine your conscience and turn your thoughts to God."⁶⁰⁶

"The Lord loves you more than you love yourself."⁶⁰⁷

"God will always give us more than we deserve."⁶⁰⁸

"A King's secret"

Padre Pio frequently said about the revelations he received: "A king's secret should be kept secret." (Tob. 12:7)⁶⁰⁹

⁵⁹⁵ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 173

⁵⁹⁶ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 122

⁵⁹⁷ Modestino, 2001, p. 23

⁵⁹⁸ Epistolario IV, p. 92

⁵⁹⁹ Epistolario III, p. 1006

⁶⁰⁰ Epistolario I, p. 304

⁶⁰¹ Ibid., p. 1247

⁶⁰² Padre Pio, 2010, p. 172

⁶⁰³ Epistolario IV, p. 450

⁶⁰⁴ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 7

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 13

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 147-148

⁶⁰⁷ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 137

⁶⁰⁸ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 12

⁶⁰⁹ Epistolario II, p. 119, p. 258, p. 309

Total joy

"Heaven is total joy, continuous joy."⁶¹⁰

This veiled life

"It is useless to try to figure out exactly what Heaven is like, because we can't understand it. But when the veil of this life is lifted, we will understand things in a different way."⁶¹¹

Celestial things

On March 25th 1914, Padre Pio wrote to Padre Benedetto: "My soul, enriched by so much knowledge of celestial things should be more talkative; yet it became almost mute."⁶¹²

"If God would take back what he gave us, we would be left with rags."⁶¹³

At night I see Paradise

From a letter to Padre Agostino on October 12th 1912: "At night, when I close my eyes, the veil is lowered and I see Paradise opening before me. Delighted by this vision, I sleep with a smile of sweet beatitude on my lips, and I wait in perfect calm until that the little companion of my childhood wakes me up."⁶¹⁴

On Suffering

"I suffer everything that Jesus suffered in the Passion."⁶¹⁵

"I suffer as much as anyone who has the whole of humanity on his back."⁶¹⁶

"He who begins to love must be ready to suffer."⁶¹⁷

"Suffering is my daily bread; my delight."⁶¹⁸

"The kingdom of Heaven is reached by prayer and suffering."⁶¹⁹

"The Lord shows me, like in a mirror, my life ahead: nothing other than martyrdom."⁶²⁰

"Jesus is my witness that I have offered and offer only to Him my extreme martyrdom."⁶²¹

"I belong entirely to everyone and because of it I suffer immensely for everyone."⁶²²

⁶¹⁰ Franciscan Friars, 2009, p. 178

⁶¹¹ Ibid., p. 178

⁶¹² Epistolario I, p. 462

⁶¹³ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 157

⁶¹⁴ Epistolario I, p. 308

⁶¹⁵ Chiron, 1999, p. 230

⁶¹⁶ Duchess Suzanne, 1968, p. 21

⁶¹⁷ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 51

⁶¹⁸ D'Apolito, 2010, p. 161

⁶¹⁹ Napolitano, 1979, p. 95

⁶²⁰ Epistolario I, p. 368

⁶²¹ Ibid., p. 1241

⁶²² Ibid., p. 1153

Blood

Padre Pio received the wounds on his hands, his feet, and his side. But he was not given a team of doctors and nurses to take care of them. It was extremely difficult to deal with them in a small impoverished convent with only a few friars who were unable to provide clean bandages or give proper attention to monitoring the wounds.

Gherardo Leone describes the following: “The undershirts, the cloths put on the side to absorb the blood, the socks, the half-gloves, brown for daytime, white for the night. Those garments could not be included in the communal washing of the convent but were taken care of by Padre Raffaele for a while. Later, these matters were looked after mainly by his spiritual daughters.”⁶²³

“Sore upon sore”

Cleonice Morcaldi to Padre Pio: “They say that your whole body is a sore.” Padre Pio: “Isn’t this our glory? If there is no more space for more sores, then we will have sore upon sore. All of this not for the love of suffering per se, but because of the fruits that I obtain. All of this gives glory to God, saves the souls of the living, and frees the dead from the fire. What more can I want?”⁶²⁴

Blood flowing

Two spiritual daughters were talking to Padre Pio. Suddenly he became pale. They heard the sound of hammering and saw trickles of blood flowing from his mouth and nose. While he was wiping the blood away, he asked them: “What do you hear?” They replied: “We heard a hammering.” Padre Pio said: “That’s OK. What you heard was the crowning of thorns.”⁶²⁵

The blood stains

Cleonice Morcaldi used to wash Padre Pio’s blood-clothes at her home, and would return them to him cleaned. “One summer’s day, I sent an undershirt of white light-weight linen to the convent for Padre Pio to wear instead of the heavy woolen habit. I received it back after three days. It was completely covered in blood. There was simply no space that was not stained with blood. In several areas, especially over the shoulders, there was stain upon stain. I had also sent him a pair of white socks. These too came back completely blood-stained from the toes to the ankles. A Franciscan father asked for these relics to be saved in the archive. A priest took a picture, and passed it on to a journalist without my permission. The Lord allowed it, because it did so much good to the ones who saw it.”⁶²⁶

⁶²³ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 10

⁶²⁴ Ibid., p. 60

⁶²⁵ Ibid., p. 27

⁶²⁶ Ibid., pp. 80-81

15 Padre Pio on doubt, atheism, and egocentrism

God believes in you

A person once said to Padre Pio: "Padre, I don't believe in God." Padre Pio replied: "But God believes in you."^{627 628}

"Tell Him"

Padre Michele Piacentino overheard a young fellow speaking with Padre Pio in the sacristy. The young man said: "Padre, I don't believe in God." Padre Pio replied: "Why are you telling me? Tell Him!"⁶²⁹

"To doubt is the greatest insult to the Divinity."⁶³⁰

Hypocrisy

Padre Pio once commented to William Carrigan: "Hypocrisy is the greatest evil of our time. It exists at all levels of our society, in high places and in low places."⁶³¹

Self-esteem, egocentrism

Padre Pio was very clear on the nature of the ego. Reflecting on the tendency of so many to refer to themselves in conversation, as when saying *I am, I did, I think, I have*, and so forth, he commented: "I, I, I. Always I in place of God!" ("*Io, Io, Io. Sempre io al posto di Dio.*")⁶³²

Padre Pio once wrote: "Self-esteem is more malicious than pride."⁶³³

On temptation

Padre Pio once said: "The great angel Lucifer was cast out of heaven as a result of only a single deliberate sinful thought."⁶³⁴

On a number of separate occasions, Padre Pio offered the following reflections:
"The thought doesn't make the sin, but consenting to the thoughts makes it so."⁶³⁵
"Temptation is like soap. It seems to soil, but in reality, it makes things clean."⁶³⁶
"Temptations against faith and purity are the merchandise offered by the enemy."⁶³⁷
"Evil is not won by doing evil, but by doing the good that has supernatural strength."⁶³⁸

⁶²⁷ Winowska, 1988, p. 121

⁶²⁸ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 168

⁶²⁹ Parente 2011, p. 29

⁶³⁰ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 231

⁶³¹ Carrigan, 2013

⁶³² da Ripabottoni, 2010, p. 337

⁶³³ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 159

⁶³⁴ Bruno, 1970, p. 144

⁶³⁵ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 65

⁶³⁶ Ibid., p. 76

⁶³⁷ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 67

⁶³⁸ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 37

"When the enemy roars around you, it shows that he is not inside you."^{639 640}

"If the devil is making an uproar, it is an excellent sign. What is terrifying is when he has made his peace and concord with a man's soul."⁶⁴¹

"Father I have met a girl and I'd like to get engaged." "Where did you meet her?" "At the beach." "At the beach? Devil's work!"⁶⁴²

Stubborn souls

Padre Pio once said: "God runs pursues the most stubborn souls. They cost him too much to abandon them."⁶⁴³

On abortion

Padre Pio once commented: "The day in which we lose our horror for abortion will be a terrible day for humanity."⁶⁴⁴

Padre Pio once said to Padre Pellegrino: "Abortion is not only homicide, it is also suicide." Surprised, Padre Pellegrino responded: "Suicide?" Padre Pio continued: "Abortion is suicide of the human race, populated only by old people."⁶⁴⁵

On Divorce

"Divorce is the passport to Hell."⁶⁴⁶

"Enclose yourself in the silence of prayer and you will save your marriage."⁶⁴⁷

On indecent movies, dancing

About indecent movies: "Those who have only nailed one nail to make the film are also responsible. God will ask them to pay the price."⁶⁴⁸

"I don't condemn dancing as such, but I believe there is always the danger of sin."⁶⁴⁹

Providence, perseverance and patience

"Have faith in Providence. Like the people of Israel when they were wandering in the desert, it is only necessary to stock up manna for one day." (Ex.16,33)⁶⁵⁰

"Be constant and persevering. The prize will be given to the one who brings things to completion, not to the one who starts and then stops."⁶⁵¹

"Remember that we have been instructed: 'By your perseverance you will secure your lives.'" (Lc.21:19).⁶⁵²

⁶³⁹ Bruno, 1970, p. 157

⁶⁴⁰ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 68

⁶⁴¹ Bruno, 1970, p. 157

⁶⁴² lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 139

⁶⁴³ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 168

⁶⁴⁴ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 130

⁶⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 130

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 139

⁶⁴⁷ lase06, 141

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 145

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 147

⁶⁵⁰ Epistolario IV, pp. 437-438

⁶⁵¹ Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 216-228

⁶⁵² Epistolario IV, p. 469

"Wait, and your turn will come."^{653 654}

"Be patient with yourself."⁶⁵⁵

"If it's appropriate to be patient towards each other, it is also useful to practice it towards ourselves."⁶⁵⁶

⁶⁵³ De Liso, 1962, p. 555

⁶⁵⁴ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 13

⁶⁵⁵ Epistolario IV, p. 469

⁶⁵⁶ Epistolario IV, p. 437

16 Padre Pio on the preciousness of time and the nature of the Universe

“Everybody should understand the preciousness of time. Let us treasure every instant. Only the passing moment is in our power. One day we will have to give a strict account of every minute.”⁶⁵⁷

“Let us not delay till tomorrow what we can do today. How can we be sure that tomorrow we will still be alive?”⁶⁵⁸

“Do not care about tomorrow. Do good deeds today. And when tomorrow comes, it will become your today, and then you can care about it.”⁶⁵⁹

“Nosiness is a defect that destroys charity, makes us lose peace, and has sad consequences. As the Apostle Paul said: *“For I determined not to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.”* (1 Cor. 2:2) ⁶⁶⁰

“Gossiping is a voluntary vice that lets charity die.”⁶⁶¹

Padre Pio once remarked on the matter of dressing in a dignified manner: “If I wore a torn habit I would not be honoring my role as a representative of St. Francis.”⁶⁶²

On the Universe

Before the three years of isolation began in 1921, Cleonice Morcaldi had the opportunity to see Padre Pio frequently and would often inquire regarding spiritual matters. On one occasion, she confided: “When I was told that there are more inhabited planets I was shocked.” Padre Pio replied: “Why? Don’t you want other beings to exist? Do you think that God’s omnipotence is limited to our little planet?”⁶⁶³

Don Nello, a priest from Vicenza, met Padre Pio in 1957 and became a spiritual son. He visited until Padre Pio’s death in 1968. One day he asked Padre Pio two questions regarding the possibility of other beings inhabiting the Universe. Padre Pio’s answers are reported in the book “Cosi’ parlo’ Padre Pio” (Thus spoke Padre Pio) on page 235. The book carries the Imprimatur of Mons. Carlo Fanton, auxiliary Bishop of Vicenza dated June 14, 1974.

On the first occasion, Don Nello commented: “Padre, they say that on other planets there are other creatures made by God.” Padre Pio answered: “Do you expect that there aren’t? Do you think that God’s Omnipotence is limited to the little planet Earth? So, don’t you want there to be other creatures who love God?”

⁶⁵⁷ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 5

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 4

⁶⁵⁹ Epistolario IV, p. 437

⁶⁶⁰ da Ripabottoni, 2010, p. 310

⁶⁶¹ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 133

⁶⁶² lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 148

⁶⁶³ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 85

On the second occasion, Don Nello mused: "I have been thinking that the Earth is as nothing when compared to all the stars and planets." Padre Pio replied: "That's right! We who come from the Earth are as nothing. The Lord has certainly not restricted his glory to this little planet. On other planets, there are creatures who have not sinned as we have."

Padre Pio once remarked to John McCaffery: "God made all things. His creation includes the stars and the humblest domestic items. I belong to the second category."⁶⁶⁴

On another occasion, Padre Pio said to him: "You have respect for me because you don't know me. I am the greatest sinner on this earth."^{665 666}

⁶⁶⁴ McCaffery, 1978, p. 66

⁶⁶⁵ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 154

⁶⁶⁶ Alberto, 2007, p. 260

17 Padre Pio on purity, defects, manners and suffering by proxy

*Padre Pio kept his virginal purity throughout his life.*⁶⁶⁷

*Padre Lorenzo: "With regard to chastity, I believe him to be angelic."*⁶⁶⁸

*Padre Romolo: "As far as chastity is concerned, his tact is extraordinary: as to this, nobody doubts he is an angel."*⁶⁶⁹

*Padre Alberto: "In the little conferences he gave us seminarians he used to say: 'Everything comes down to purity. Purity says it all.'"*⁶⁷⁰

On Purity

Mons. George Pogany lived near the convent from 1940 until 1957. He helped Padre Pio and the friars, confessing, saying Mass, bringing Communion to bedridden people, and translating. He moved to the USA in 1957, and was a pastor in Irvington, New Jersey, for decades. Reflecting on his time with Padre Pio, Mons. Pogany stated: "Sometimes I was Padre Pio's confessor. I don't believe that he ever committed sin, not even a venial one. No, I don't think so. I heard his confession."⁶⁷¹

Padre Agostino was a spiritual director of Padre Pio and maintained continuous contact with him from 1907 until 1967. He kept a diary in which his experiences with Padre Pio were recorded. In it, he wrote: "I can swear that Padre Pio has kept his virginity, and never committed a venial sin against the angelic virtue. One day he said to me: 'I swear that I have never kissed a woman; not even my mother.'"⁶⁷²

In his middle age, Padre Pio said to another priest: "When I was a teenager, I didn't even know how human beings came into the world. None of the teenagers in Pietrelcina knew anything about sex in those days."⁶⁷³

As Padre Pio was passing by, a woman called out: "Padre, touch me! Padre, touch me." Padre Pio walked on, mumbling to himself: "I've never touched a woman in my life, and I'm not going to start now!"⁶⁷⁴

Padre Pio: "Guard jealously the purity of your heart and of your body. These two wings will make us almost divine."⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁶⁷ Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate, 1999, p. 13

⁶⁶⁸ Castelli, 2011, p. 70

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid., 70

⁶⁷⁰ Schug, 1987, p. 47

⁶⁷¹ Ruffin, 1991, p. 420

⁶⁷² Agostino, 2012, p. 100

⁶⁷³ Ruffin, 1991, p. 39

⁶⁷⁴ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 164

⁶⁷⁵ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 8

Padre Pio once said to a priest: "Lust is the shortest and the easiest way to get to Hell. You know this and you say it to others. Try to practice what you preach."⁶⁷⁶ To another priest, he added: "Impurity is the rock against which many vocations are shattered."⁶⁷⁷

Padre Pio wrote: "The enemy tries to put thoughts of impurity and desperation into my heart."⁶⁷⁸

Padre Lodovico made the following comments regarding Padre Pio: "With women, he conducts himself with politeness, reserve, and at times, even austerity."⁶⁷⁹ "He treats all women with kindness and sweetness, but is very reserved. The women who meet with him regularly live exemplary and extremely devout lives."⁶⁸⁰ "I admire his composure and his unfeigned piety."⁶⁸¹

Padre Cherubino observed: "He treats the women with affability and sweetness, but is always most reserved."⁶⁸²

His defects

Padre Lorenzo: "When he is summoned to see visitors, he occasionally gets irritated, although he immediately acknowledges it."⁶⁸³ "When he recites the words of the Consecration, I think he might have some scruples. I have on occasion heard some words being repeated."⁶⁸⁴

Mons. Rossi reported the following to the Holy Office: "He has his own liturgical flaws. He doesn't bow his head at the name of the Holy Father at the *Collect*, during the introduction of the Mass. He doesn't open and close his hands at the *Oremus*. He doesn't incline towards the Crucifix at the *Per Dominum Nostrum Jesum Christum*. When turning the pages of the missal he keeps the other hand up in the air. He doesn't bow perfectly towards the altar at the *Munda* and at the *Te Igitur*. He is not entirely precise in the ceremonies of Communion."⁶⁸⁵

Mons. Rossi undertook a formal inspection of Padre Pio's room in 1921, and wrote: "He doesn't seem as tidy in the way he takes care of his things. In his cell, the various drawers are somewhat disordered. There are sheets of paper, gloves, quinine, candies for the boys, images. Everything is rather muddled."⁶⁸⁶

Mons. Rossi commented further: "Sometimes he utters such exclamations as *per Bacco* (by Bacchus), my God, my Jesus, in the middle of an animated conversation."⁶⁸⁷

⁶⁷⁶ lasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 142-143

⁶⁷⁷ Ibid., 143

⁶⁷⁸ Epistolario I, p. 235

⁶⁷⁹ Castelli, 2011, p. 192

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 198

⁶⁸¹ Ibid., p. 194

⁶⁸² Ibid., p. 70

⁶⁸³ Ibid., p. 158

⁶⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 161

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 99

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 95

⁶⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 94

Padre Tarcisio asked Padre Pio why he was so strict with some people. "My son, before I say anything that might make a person suffer, I myself suffer a lot. But it's necessary, because my job is to remove the old and install the new."⁶⁸⁸

Padre Pio once confided to Padre Benedetto: "I sometimes raise my voice when correcting people. I realize that this is a shameful weakness. I regret it."⁶⁸⁹

Padre Pio suffering by proxy

*"Oh Lord, give me the sadness and pain of my brothers. Save suffering, the best part, for me."*⁶⁹⁰

*"I will take for myself all of your pains."*⁶⁹¹

"Let us suffer together."

A young fellow had a brain tumor. Don Attilio Negrisola suggested that he speak to Padre Pio about it. When the young man did actually meet with Padre Pio, Padre Pio said to him: "Let us suffer together." Later that day, Padre Pio told Don Negrisola: "I have a massive headache today. It feels as though someone is drilling into my head." Some time later, Don Attilio learned that the boy had been healed of the tumor.⁶⁹²

"Did you forget your promise?"

Padre Eusebio Notte showed Padre Pio a letter asking that he offer his sufferings for a priest. The following morning, Padre Pio complained to Eusebio that he was suffering from excruciating pains in his side. Padre Eusebio said to him: "Have you forgotten your promise?" Padre Pio sighed and said: "Oh yes!"⁶⁹³

Victim for Pope Pius XII

In the winter of 1953/54 Pope Pius XII fell gravely ill. His sister sent a letter to Padre Pio. The Pope recovered, and asked Mons. Montini, secretary of State and future Pope Paul VI to send Padre Pio a letter of thanks. Padre Pio had offered himself as a victim on behalf of Pope Pius XII. The letter is included in the *Positio*.⁶⁹⁴

"Cheer up! It will go away!"

Padre Agostino was complaining of severe pain in his knee. Padre Pio said to him: "Cheer up! It will go away!" A few minutes later, Padre Eusebio saw Padre Pio limping markedly. Padre Eusebio had overheard Padre Agostino's complaint. He decided to pay him a visit. Padre Agostino said: "You know, I feel really well, the pain in my knee has completely disappeared." Padre Eusebio understood the whole thing.⁶⁹⁵

"Don't worry."

Padre Tarcisio Zullo reported that in 1957 the provincial padre in Foggia fell gravely ill with bronchopneumonia. Padre Tarcisio travelled to San Giovanni Rotondo in order to

⁶⁸⁸ Peroni, 2002, p. 387

⁶⁸⁹ Epistolario I, p. 1170

⁶⁹⁰ Gaeta, 2002, p. 50

⁶⁹¹ di Flumeri, 1996, p. 1303

⁶⁹² Gaeta, 2002, p. 51

⁶⁹³ Ibid., p. 51

⁶⁹⁴ di Flumeri, 1996, p. 423

⁶⁹⁵ Gaeta, 2002, p. 51

inform Padre Pio. Padre Pio told him not to worry. By the time Padre Tarcisio had returned to Foggia, the superior was healed. At the same time, he learned that Padre Pio had suddenly become ill.⁶⁹⁶

⁶⁹⁶ di Flumeri, 1996, p. 1303

18 Padre Pio on Mass: The early morning witnesses

The masses of Padre Pio were an extraordinary mystical event in which everyone present became a witness to the height of complete human immolation to God made manifest in the person of Padre Pio at the altar.

The experience of Padre's Pio's mass was a participation by everyone present in the mystical and physical re-living of the Passion of Jesus from Gethsemane to Golgotha. Though hidden from view, this was strangely and unmistakably felt by everyone in attendance.

To be near the altar while Padre Pio celebrated his daily mass at 5 am was to encounter at close range the reality of the supernatural.

On the Altar and the Confessional

Padre Francesco Napolitano wrote: "Padre Pio's entire priestly life was lived between two most brilliant lights: the altar and the confessional."⁶⁹⁷

Padre Pio: "God elects the priest for the Altar and the confessional."⁶⁹⁸

Padre Pio once intimated: "Jesus united me with the great endeavor of human redemption. The Heavenly Father let me ascend the Cross of His Son. I am sure that from there, I will never descend."⁶⁹⁹

Witnesses

Mary Ingoldsby: "The early morning call to climb the steep hill to the friary for the 5 AM Mass was a penitential rite in itself."⁷⁰⁰ During the Mass: "His face suggested the face of a suffering Christ bowed down beneath the weight of the cross."⁷⁰¹

Padre Pio Capuano: "There is no report of any other place in the world where people would be waiting for hours at the locked door of a church, rain or shine or snow or wind or cold, in order to attend a Mass celebrated at four or five in the morning."⁷⁰²

Padre Francesco Napolitano: "As soon as the doors of the church opened there was a terrible commotion to get to the altar where Padre Pio was to celebrate the Mass. As soon as Padre Pio appeared in the doorway, a veil of silence descended, creating an atmosphere of heavenly presence."⁷⁰³

⁶⁹⁷ Napolitano, 1979, p. 80

⁶⁹⁸ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 100

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 68

⁷⁰⁰ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 105

⁷⁰¹ Ibid., p. 105

⁷⁰² Capuano, 2012, p. 75

⁷⁰³ Napolitano, 1979, pp. 54-55

Padre Alessio: "As he walked towards the altar with great difficulty, he recited the *Miserere* psalm with deep compunction and humility."⁷⁰⁴

In April 1948, Karol Wojtyla, the future Pope John Paul II, attended Padre Pio's Mass. He reflected: "It was long. He was suffering profoundly. On the altar, at San Giovanni Rotondo, the sacrifice of Christ himself, the bloodless sacrifice, was taking place. At the same time, the bloody wounds on the hands of Padre Pio made me think of the whole sacrifice, of Jesus Crucified. The event stayed with me as an unforgettable experience. This memory has continued indelibly into the present and somehow, today I have before my eyes what I myself witnessed then."⁷⁰⁵

Guido Piovene: "Padre Pio celebrates Mass in a state of ecstasy and rapture."⁷⁰⁶

Nino Salvaneschi: "When Padre Pio celebrates Mass, one has the feeling that he – and we – are in a different world. He is truly with God." "During Mass, Padre Pio seemed to belong to a humanity that was superior to our own."⁷⁰⁷

Oscar De Liso: "As Padre Pio goes into ecstasy during the Mass, he becomes an image of agony. His eyes are shut, his face contorted in pain, his lips tremble, his cheeks are wet with tears. His ecstasy lasts long as he relives the Passion of the Cross. For several minutes he leans on the altar and weeps, standing perfectly still in mystical transport. The expression on his face is that of a nomad of the beyond."⁷⁰⁸

Bishop Giuseppe Petralia: "Padre Pio's Mass was a mission of reparation. During the Mass, he relived the tragedy of the Passion in his own body. Padre Pio was made to suffer the agony of Gethsemane, the scourging in the praetorium, the crowning with thorns, the mockery of the crowd, the humiliation of the unjust sentence, the carrying of the Cross, and the crucifixion."⁷⁰⁹

Luigi Peroni: "On the altar, the whole Passion is lived again in Padre Pio's flesh: the agony, the scourging, the thorns, the crucifixion, and the piercing by the lance."⁷¹⁰

Mons. Paolo Carta (Archbishop of Sassari from 1962-1982): "At the altar, one had the impression that space and time had been annulled between the altar at San Giovanni Rotondo and the Hill of Calvary."^{711 712}

Padre Domenico Mondrone: "Anyone who has attended Padre Pio's Mass, has seen the distance between the altar and the Calvary annihilated."⁷¹³

⁷⁰⁴ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 103

⁷⁰⁵ Castelli, 2011, pp. 70-71

⁷⁰⁶ di Flumeri, 1996, (Positio IV), p. 46

⁷⁰⁷ Napolitano, 1979, p. 71

⁷⁰⁸ De Liso, 1962, p. 10

⁷⁰⁹ Ingoldsby, 1978, pp. 99-100

⁷¹⁰ Peroni, 2002, pp. 415-416

⁷¹¹ Ruffin, 1991, p. 292

⁷¹² Ingoldsby, 1978, pp. 101-102

⁷¹³ Napolitano, 1979, pp. 57-58

Padre Clemente Naef noted that after the consecration Padre Pio's head jerked sharply from time to time "as though he had been struck in the face."⁷¹⁴

Padre Giovanni da Baggio: "Certain nervous twitchings of his face, certain glances upward, certain movements of his head as though he was chasing away something vexatious, all suggested deep suffering and great efforts to keep him from being caught up into ecstasy."^{715 716}

Padre Tarcisio Zullo: "Padre Pio made the Lord's Passion his own."⁷¹⁷

Padre Innocenzo: "I was Padre Pio's assistant from 1951-1953. His alarm clock was always set for 2:30 am. Each morning, I went to his cell to accompany him down to the sacristy. I always found him ready and waiting for me, with the beads hidden in his hand while he recited the Rosary."⁷¹⁸

Alberto Del Fante: "During the Mass, Padre Pio reenacts the Passion, becoming a living sacrificial victim."⁷¹⁹

John McCaffery: "When the Mass reached the Consecration one truly felt that this was the center of the Universe."⁷²⁰

Malachi Gerard Carroll: "With Padre Pio at the altar, Calvary becomes a reality, and the Mass appears in all its shattering wonder for each and all."⁷²¹

Wanda Poltawska: "The Mass Lasted a long time but the people who filled the church were completely still, transfixed by the Eucharist made real to them by this extraordinary man."⁷²²

Graziella Cascavilla: "It was like having Christ in our midst."⁷²³

Nina Campanile: "Padre Pio was a divine man."⁷²⁴

Don Pierino Galeone: "I have seen Padre Pio at the altar taking on the appearance of Jesus."⁷²⁵

Giovanni Bardazzi da Prato records his experience when he attended the Mass of Padre Pio out of curiosity. "I was observing the celebrant. He seemed to be suffering terrible pains. I didn't believe there was a God, but a thought occurred to me. I mentally said: 'This Mass is getting too long. If you exist, let me suffer what he is suffering'. In an instant I was

⁷¹⁴ Ruffin, 1991, p. 292

⁷¹⁵ Ibid., p. 292

⁷¹⁶ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 102

⁷¹⁷ Iasenzaniro, 2007, p. 492

⁷¹⁸ Ingoldsby, 1978, pp. 102-103

⁷¹⁹ Ibid., p. 194

⁷²⁰ McCaffery, 1978, p. 50

⁷²¹ Franciscan Friars, 2009, p. 95

⁷²² Gallagher, 1995, p. 183

⁷²³ Iasenzaniro, 2007, p. 438

⁷²⁴ Ibid., p. 438

⁷²⁵ Galeone, 2009, p. 69

plunged into the most atrocious tortures. I called out silently: 'Stop! If this lasts for one more second, I will be dead.' The pain immediately stopped. Nobody around me noticed anything. Since that experience, I have learned never to challenge God."⁷²⁶

Bill Carrigan of the US 15th Air Force was assigned to the American Red Cross Field Office in Foggia. In December 1943, he attended one of Padre Pio's masses and observed the following: "As he began the consecration, he seemed to be in great pain, shifting his weight from side to side, hesitating to begin the words of the consecration which he would start and repeat, biting them off with a clicking of his teeth as if in great pain. His cheek muscles twitched and tears were visible on his cheeks. He reached for the chalice and jerked his hand back violently, as if the pain was so severe that he could not hold the chalice in his hand. After the Consecration, he seemed exhausted and leaned forward as in deep meditation."⁷²⁷

Father John D. Saint John, Jesuit chaplain of the US 15th Air Force observed the following: "During the Mass he seemed to be in ecstasy. At the Consecration, holding the Host up, he seemed to be out of this world. He seemed not to know where he was. His eyes were aglow."⁷²⁸

Ray Nunten, a member of the 345th Signal Company wing, reported on his experience at one of Padre Pio's masses in 1944: "When Padre Pio says Mass he seems to be transfigured into a celestial being. You can see him twisting and moving about in agony, and tears roll down his cheeks. When he offers up the Host, he doesn't look directly at the Host, but just over it, into the air; and the look of his earthly face is not of this world."⁷²⁹

Joe Peterson was an American G.I. stationed at Bari in 1943. He recalls: "His eyes were fixed in a particular spot. He would speak although you couldn't hear him. You would see his lips moving. He seemed to be in conversation with invisible beings."⁷³⁰

In May 1959, Father John Esseff, from Scranton, Pennsylvania, and his friend Father Bob Calligan, went to Padre Pio's Mass together with Mary Pyle.

John reported: "That night was chilly, and at 2:00 am, we went to the door of the church. Mary Pyle told us that as soon as we entered we had to go into the sacristy and sign up for an altar to say Mass. In pre-Vatican II, concelebration was not allowed. While we both were signing up, Padre Pio came into the sacristy to prepare for the Mass. Everyone immediately knelt down. A little later, he came over to me and took off his glove. I could see the hole in his hand. In fact, I could see the light through the hole. A few minutes later he began Mass. The Mass lasted for about three hours. At the consecration, he held the host up for at least twenty minutes."⁷³¹

⁷²⁶ Bardazzi, 2003, pp. 31-32

⁷²⁷ Ruffin, 1991, p. 258

⁷²⁸ Ibid., p. 262

⁷²⁹ Rega, 2005, p. 175

⁷³⁰ Ruffin, 1991, p. 292

⁷³¹ Esseff, 2010, p. 144

Padre Pio on the Mass

"It would be easier for the earth to carry on without the sun than without the Mass." ^{732 733}

"The Mass gives God infinite glory." ⁷³⁴

"The benefits of the Mass cannot be enumerated. We will know them in Paradise." ⁷³⁵

"I'd never leave the altar. I'd like to celebrate sixty Masses a day." ⁷³⁶

"If people knew the value of the Mass, there would be policemen at the door, to regulate access to the church every time that a Mass is celebrated". ⁷³⁷

"I see all my children who come to the altar, as if in a mirror." ⁷³⁸

"I am unworthy to represent Jesus on earth, to be Christ on the altar. The responsibility of the priesthood scares me." ^{739 740}

⁷³² Padre Pio, 2010, p. 119

⁷³³ Capuano, 2012, p. 76

⁷³⁴ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 187

⁷³⁵ Ibid., p. 181

⁷³⁶ Ibid., p. 179

⁷³⁷ Capuano, 2012, p. 76

⁷³⁸ Chiron, 1999, p. 232

⁷³⁹ Alberto, 2007, p. 259

⁷⁴⁰ da Ripabottoni, 2010, p. 358

19 Padre Pio as confessor

*Padre Pio spent most of his day hearing confessions.*⁷⁴¹

*From 1918 until about 1923 Padre Pio heard confessions fifteen to nineteen hours a day.*⁷⁴²

*Padre Pio frequently heard confessions for fifteen hours a day, sometimes even for nineteen hours. He was a martyr to this duty, a martyr to the sacrament of mercy.*⁷⁴³

During the 1940's and 1950's, he heard confessions for about eight hours every day.

In 1962, 83,035 women and 19,837 men registered to confess with Padre Pio - an average of over 270 every day.

In 1967 Padre Pio confessed about 15,000 women and 10,000 men - an average of 70 people per day.

Women attended a confessional. Men confessed kneeling on a kneeler in the old sacristy.

*It has been estimated that over the course of his life, Padre Pio heard at least five million confessions.*⁷⁴⁴

It was like being at the Judgment.

The average confession made to Padre Pio lasted only three minutes. Padre Pio demanded that each confession be a true conversion. No excuses, no insincerity, but frankness, honesty, and firm resolution.

Padre Pio had strong views on women's dress. A sign read: "By Padre Pio's explicit wish, women must enter his confessional wearing skirts at least eight inches below the knees. It is forbidden to borrow longer dresses in church and to wear them for the confessional."

For men, shorts, and short sleeves - even on children - were not accepted around Padre Pio. He once said to a man who attended confession in short sleeves: "Either you lengthen the sleeves or shorten your arms."⁷⁴⁵

Padre Marcellino commented: "Padre Pio found himself trapped between compassion and duty."⁷⁴⁶ "There were times when Padre Pio's interventions seemed insensitive and even rude. But they were part of a long mysterious process of selection and preparation reserved especially for those souls who would become part of his big family."⁷⁴⁷

In the confessional, he went straight to the point: Christ crucified.⁷⁴⁸

At the Canonization Mass for Padre Pio in 2002, Pope John Paul II declared: "Padre Pio was a generous dispenser of divine mercy, making himself available to all by welcoming them, by spiritual direction and, especially, by the administration of the sacrament of penance."⁷⁴⁹

⁷⁴¹ Winowska, 1988, p. 30

⁷⁴² Ruffin, 1991, p. 294

⁷⁴³ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 67

⁷⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 74

⁷⁴⁵ Modestino, 2001, p. 54

⁷⁴⁶ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 57

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid., p.51

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 34

⁷⁴⁹ Viewed at: http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/2002/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_20020616_padre-pio.html

Padre Pio once commented: "As St. Ambrose said, we should not be ashamed to confess what we were not ashamed of doing."⁷⁵⁰ On another occasion, he said: "I treat people the way they deserve before God."⁷⁵¹

Padre Pio lamented to Padre Gabriele Bove: "There is not a single one who has asked to be helped to become a saint."⁷⁵²

To one who refused to repent, Padre Pio said: "Well, if you want to go to hell, I don't. You want to pull me there too."⁷⁵³

The following comments were all offered by Padre Pio:

"Never say to God: I have sinned and deserve your punishment. Rather say: I have sinned but be merciful to me."⁷⁵⁴

"It is difficult for a soul that is not persistently evil to be damned because at the moment of death, God asks: 'Do you want me?' Those who go to hell only do so because they want to."⁷⁵⁵

"Do not dwell on sins that have already been confessed. Jesus has forgiven them."⁷⁵⁶

"As long as you are afraid to fall, you will not sin. You should become afraid when you are not afraid anymore."^{757 758 759}

"The mercy of God, my son, is infinitely greater than your malice."⁷⁶⁰

The "severity" of Padre Pio

Padre Francesco Napolitano offered the following reflection: "Padre Pio was a most severe confessor. Everyone trembled before him."⁷⁶¹ On another occasion, he remarked: "Padre Pio never compromised with evil, no matter who the sinner was."⁷⁶²

Padre Pellegrino commented: "For him every confession had to be a sign of conversion."⁷⁶³

Padre Pio offered the following reflections on his at-times heated manner: "Sometimes words must be a little angry externally, however, serenity never leaves me."⁷⁶⁴

"It is better to be reprimanded by a man in this world than by God in the next."⁷⁶⁵

"Do as I do. If I have an outburst, internally I am always serene."^{766 767}

⁷⁵⁰ di Flumeri, 1996, IV, p. 443

⁷⁵¹ Carmelo, 2002, p. 78

⁷⁵² lasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 106-107

⁷⁵³ Ibid., p. 41

⁷⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 197

⁷⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 198

⁷⁵⁶ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 76

⁷⁵⁷ De Liso, 1962, p. 556

⁷⁵⁸ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 16

⁷⁵⁹ Duchess Suzanne, 1968, p. 20

⁷⁶⁰ da Ripabottoni, 2010, p. 304

⁷⁶¹ Napolitano, 1979, p. 68

⁷⁶² Ibid., p. 67

⁷⁶³ lase06, 107

⁷⁶⁴ Sch87, 57

⁷⁶⁵ Ingoldsby 1978, p. 68

⁷⁶⁶ Alberto, 2007, p. 279

⁷⁶⁷ da Riese, 2010, p. 453

"After I give the absolution I accompany all my penitents as though I was their shadow."⁷⁶⁸

At times, Padre Pio was brusque in his manner. His intention was to shake up and bring repentance to those in need of conversion, and to keep away the curious and the fanatics. There was always a reason for his rudeness. People were known to have actually snipped off pieces of his habit with nail scissors as he passed by the corridor in which they were kneeling. He would say: "Go away. What are you here for? What do you want from me? They cut my cord and habit with scissors. This is paganism! This is fanaticism!"⁷⁶⁹

"I'm forced to be rude. I am sorry, but if I don't act this way, they will kill me."⁷⁷⁰

Padre Tarcisio asked Padre Pio why he was so severe with some people. "My son, before making people suffer, I suffer a lot myself. But it's necessary, because my job is to remove the old and put in the new."⁷⁷¹

Padre Pio wanted to bring lost souls back to God as quickly as possible: "I can hit my children. I want to bring them up fast, even with blows".⁷⁷²

Padre Joseph Pius once said: "I call Padre Pio an actor for souls."⁷⁷³

"If a doctor takes pity on a patient, his delay will make a wound gangrenous."⁷⁷⁴

He once confided to Padre Carmelo, superior of the convent: "I am only upset on the surface. My heart is always calm and serene".⁷⁷⁵

"I act in such a manner because my fatherly heart wants to recall souls to penance. I can't bear the thought that they remain in sin."⁷⁷⁶

"To rouse certain souls, you need to use cannonballs. Treating them with gentleness is a waste of time."⁷⁷⁷

"I don't give a candy to someone who needs a purgative."⁷⁷⁸

"If I reproach someone, it is for the benefit of their soul."⁷⁷⁹

"Before reproaching a soul, I suffer it first. But it is not I who act, but He who is in me and above me."⁷⁸⁰

⁷⁶⁸ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 350

⁷⁶⁹ da Riese, 2010, p. 453

⁷⁷⁰ Alberto, 2007, pp. 237-238

⁷⁷¹ Peroni, 2002, p. 387

⁷⁷² Ibid., 387

⁷⁷³ Schug, 1987, p. 68

⁷⁷⁴ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 154

⁷⁷⁵ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 31

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 28

⁷⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 30

⁷⁷⁸ Napolitano, 1979, p. 67

⁷⁷⁹ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 32

⁷⁸⁰ Alberto, 2007, p. 280

Refusal of absolution

On one occasion, even before a man attending confession had opened his mouth, Padre Pio said: "Go away. In collaboration with your wife, you have aborted three times!"⁷⁸¹

Padre Pio: "Do you go to Mass?" Reply: "I have missed Mass ten or twenty times." Padre Pio: "After ten comes eleven. Go away."⁷⁸²

A person confessed having had bad thoughts against chastity. Padre Pio asked: "How many times?" The person replied: "Six or seven." Padre Pio responded: "Seven is not the same as six. It means one more deadly sin." The person was sent away.⁷⁸³

One woman who had travelled a long way to see Padre Pio said to him in confession, "Padre Pio, four years ago I lost my husband and I haven't been to church since then." Padre Pio replied: "Because you lost your husband, you also lost God? Go away! Go away!"

Padre Luigi Lo Viscovo told Padre Pio that a French priest wished to confess to him, and he wanted to know whether Padre Pio could do it. Padre Pio: "Tell him that I know French, English, Greek, Latin, Aramaic, German, and other languages, but I don't want to confess him." ⁷⁸⁴

Some friars once approached Padre Pio and asked: "When you don't give absolution, those souls come to us. What should we do?" Padre Pio replied: "You must give absolution. There is only one Padre Pio."⁷⁸⁵

Padre Pio once said to Padre Pellegrino: "When I don't give absolution, it is to myself that I don't give it."⁷⁸⁶

The sense of sin

Pope Pius XII once reflected: "The greatest sin is that men have started to lose the sense of sin."⁷⁸⁷ Pope Paul VI elaborated: "Once the human mind separates itself from the divine wisdom, the concept of sin has been lost."⁷⁸⁸

Padre Pio once said to a priest: "What a dreadful thing it is to sit in the tribunal of confession, were we dispense the blood of Christ! Take care not to throw it away too easily."⁷⁸⁹ On another occasion, he commented: "I should prefer death rather than offending God. . . . I would prefer martyrdom rather than offending God even in a single instance."⁷⁹⁰

After a day of hearing confessions, Padre Pio intimated: "Oh the souls! If you knew how much they cost!"⁷⁹¹

⁷⁸¹ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 132

⁷⁸² lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 49

⁷⁸³ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 50

⁷⁸⁴ di Flumeri, 1996, II, p. 1684

⁷⁸⁵ Capobianco, 2006, pp. 112-113

⁷⁸⁶ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 54

⁷⁸⁷ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 22

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 22

⁷⁸⁹ Ingoldsby, 1978, pp. 67-68

⁷⁹⁰ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 20

⁷⁹¹ Capuano, 2012, p. 83

Another comment by Padre Pio: "I always keep my promises. Whatever I start, I complete."⁷⁹²

⁷⁹² lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 358

20 On Padre Pio's personality

Padre Pio engaged with numerous individuals throughout the course of his life. His personality touched most of them very deeply, and often transformatively. The comments below have been selected from the reflections of those who knew him during his life.

Padre Lodovico da San Giovanni Rotondo: "He is kind and affable with everyone. He is always smiling and sometimes tells wonderful jokes."⁷⁹³

Padre Pietro: "He is candid, kind, charming, charitable, obedient, modest, and pious."⁷⁹⁴

Padre Luigi: He is always indifferent before any honor. We have never seen him abandon his simplicity.⁷⁹⁵

Padre Eusebio: "Padre Pio was a priest in whom God was particularly alive."⁷⁹⁶ "In Padre Pio the supernatural mixed with the natural in a way they you were unable to distinguish where the first ended and the second started."⁷⁹⁷

"People would go to him not only for confession but with every kind of question you could imagine. And as he left the confessional to go upstairs, the corridor was lined with people eager to ask him more questions. And though different people may have asked him the same question, each received a different answer. He never said "Let me think about it." He had the answer bing, bing, bing, bing. If I were to speak like that, you would think that I was a madman."⁷⁹⁸

Padre Alessio: "In San Giovanni Rotondo, the extraordinary became ordinary and nobody paid much attention to it."⁷⁹⁹

Don Giovanni Rossi: "Padre Pio was a man filled with the Holy Spirit."⁸⁰⁰

Maria Winowska: "Padre Pio had all the beautiful qualities of a southern Italian, including a touch of humor that inspired both immediate answers and biting witticisms, flavored by peasant-like shrewdness."⁸⁰¹ "Padre Pio never ceased saying 'Yes' to God."⁸⁰²

Mons. Raffaello Rossi: "The extraordinary manifestations of Padre Pio cannot be explained. But they are certainly not the result of diabolic intervention, deception or fraud."⁸⁰³ "He has a profound and tangible humility, and conducts himself with utmost

⁷⁹³ Castelli, 2011, p. 192

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 91

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 174

⁷⁹⁶ Schug, 1987, p. 122

⁷⁹⁷ Parente, 2011b, p. 127

⁷⁹⁸ Schug, 1987, pp. 118-122

⁷⁹⁹ Parente, 2011, p. 37

⁸⁰⁰ Bruno, 1970, p. 224

⁸⁰¹ Winowska, 1988, p. 57

⁸⁰² Ibid., p. 178

⁸⁰³ Castelli, 2011, p. 132

simplicity and indifference, as though nothing unusual ever occurred around his person. He is generally polite and respectful.”⁸⁰⁴

Mary Ingoldsby: “A masterpiece of God’s creative hand.”⁸⁰⁵

Bishop Paolo Carta: “He reached the summit of transforming union and mystical experience.”⁸⁰⁶

Barbara Ward: “Padre Pio was the last man in the world to forget that Our Lord not only preached to souls but also healed bodies, and promised Heaven to those that feed the hungry and clothe the naked.”⁸⁰⁷

Eileen Dunn Bertanzetti: “Despite all the afflictions of his body and soul, Padre Pio continued to trust Christ and to find great joy in God.”⁸⁰⁸ “Padre Pio bargained with God for souls”⁸⁰⁹

Dorothy Gaudiose: “His authenticity, originality, and genuineness were indisputable, and the sincerity of his spirit was above suspicion.”⁸¹⁰

Pope Benedict XV in 1920: “Padre Pio is truly a man of God though everyone does not appreciate him as he deserves to be appreciated.”^{811 812}

Pope Paul VI: “Padre Pio was a representative of Our Lord marked with the imprint of his wounds. He was a man of prayer and suffering.”⁸¹³

Dr. Bruno Pavone: “At the *Casa Sollievo*, Padre Pio would continually repeat to the nuns, the nurses, the doctors: “When you see the patient, look at Jesus Christ. In every sick person, see Jesus suffering. In the sick and the poor, see Jesus twice because Jesus was very poor.”⁸¹⁴

Padre Lorenzo da San Marco in Lamis: “Throughout the time he was at Montefusco, he was always exemplary. He was the most exemplary, and never grumbled.”⁸¹⁵

Father Joseph Pius: “To encounter Padre Pio was like reading medieval history.”⁸¹⁶ “We will never be finished with Padre Pio till the end of time.”⁸¹⁷

⁸⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 95

⁸⁰⁵ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. xiii

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 41

⁸⁰⁷ Morcaldi, 2013, p. xvii

⁸⁰⁸ Dunn Bertanzetti, 1999, p. 12

⁸⁰⁹ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 104

⁸¹⁰ Gaudiose 1974, p. x

⁸¹¹ De Liso, 1962, p. 78

⁸¹² Winowska, 1988, p. 153

⁸¹³ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 146

⁸¹⁴ Schug, 1987, p. 35

⁸¹⁵ Castelli, 2011, p. 151

⁸¹⁶ Schug, 1987, p. 74

⁸¹⁷ Ibid., p. 79

Padre Saint John: "He had a nice chuckle and a nice smile. He was a gentle person. He had a very dignified walk. He spoke a few English words."⁸¹⁸

Padre Francesco Napolitano: "Padre Pio's life on earth was in perpetual union with God."⁸¹⁹

Padre Lorenzo: "Padre Agostino and Padre Benedetto used to visit Padre Pio for advice, and some friars would comment: "They have gone to consult the saint in Mecca."⁸²⁰

Padre Meyer: "The crowd would steal his handkerchief, cut pieces from his habit and cut off his cord. He would not even notice it with all the people pushing and pulling."⁸²¹ Sometimes Padre Pio took hold of his cord and twirled it menacingly at people grabbing him. He would say: "This is paganism! This is fanaticism!"⁸²²

Duchess Suzanne of St. Alban: "The fascination of his gruff manner and the magnetism of his extraordinary saintliness drew people to him, and once they had met him, the experience marked them for life."⁸²³

Heidi: "Being in San Giovanni Rotondo is like having a mirror before your face, but instead of reflecting your face, it reflects your soul."⁸²⁴

Angelo Mischitelli: "His life was lived between cell, choir, confessional, altar, hallway and veranda."⁸²⁵

Giovanni Bardazzi: "Padre Pio is goodness walking." (*La bonta' che cammina.*)⁸²⁶

Padre Ignazio: "One evening while joking with the friars, I made them try the effects of veratridine when it is drawn close to the nose and inhaled. Padre Pio took some as well and had to go back to his cell because he couldn't stop sneezing."⁸²⁷

Mary Bridget Nolan: "It doesn't happen every day that we hear about Angels smiling, crying, driving cars, being involved in human events."⁸²⁸

Dorothy Valls: "Padre Pio had such knowledge of the human soul that Freud could learn from him."⁸²⁹

Padre Alberto: "So many people tell me that Padre Pio is a supernatural being. He is like Christ reincarnated sent by God to curb the evil of people."⁸³⁰

⁸¹⁸ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 262-263

⁸¹⁹ Napolitano, 1979, p. 51

⁸²⁰ Castelli, 2011, p. 152

⁸²¹ Ruffin, 1991, p. 293

⁸²² Ibid., p. 293

⁸²³ Duchess Suzanne, 1983, p. ix

⁸²⁴ Ibid., p. 163

⁸²⁵ di Ripabottoni, 2011, p. 30

⁸²⁶ McCaffery, 1978, p. 28

⁸²⁷ Castelli, 2011, p. 168

⁸²⁸ Parente, 2011b, p. 34

⁸²⁹ Schug, 1987, p. 143

⁸³⁰ Ibid., p. 49

Padre Atanasio Lonardo: "He was a real builder of God's kingdom on earth."⁸³¹

Padre Innocenzo Santoro: "Padre Pio never refused anyone, never refused anything. All one had to do was ask."⁸³²

Padre Giovanni da Baggio: "Padre Pio had the ingenuous candor of a little child, and he opened his heart with great affection to those who approached him in a frank and sincere spirit."⁸³³

Padre Cherubino: "Padre Pio is very simple, and for this reason he rather needs the direction and advice of those around him."⁸³⁴

Padre Marcellino: "We will only really know who Padre Pio was when we are in Heaven."⁸³⁵

Padre Calogero Peri: "It is difficult for me to understand God's plan for Padre Pio, whose saintliness has been both opposed and exalted as have but few cases in the history of the Church."⁸³⁶

Padre Lorenzo: "His humility is remarkable. One cannot detect the existence of any duplicity in him. He is very simple, so much so that he rather needs direction and advice. He has a mild tendency to judge his superiors."⁸³⁷

Venerable Giocondo Lorgna: "Padre Pio is the most affable, cordial, angelic, and obedient of beings. He has healed others, yet he himself is always ill."⁸³⁸

Archbishop Adolfo Tortolo: "Padre Pio moved the world and continues to move it."⁸³⁹

Archbishop Andrea Cesarano: "I saw Padre Pio in 1933 when he was in complete seclusion. He was calm, serene, cheerful, and fully obedient to the orders."⁸⁴⁰

Padre Donato da Welle: "Padre Pio is a great saint."⁸⁴¹

Don Pierino Galeone: Padre Pio converted sinners, healed incurably sick people, predicted the future, was at the bedside of the dying, as happened with my mother, and in many other cases in hospitals, private homes and concentration camps. He drove the cars

⁸³¹ Iasenzaniro, 2007, p. 605

⁸³² Ibid., p. 605

⁸³³ Franciscan Friars, 2009, p. 118

⁸³⁴ Castelli, 2011, p. 198

⁸³⁵ Iasenzaniro, 2007, p. 592

⁸³⁶ Ibid., p. 594

⁸³⁷ Castelli, 2011, p. 158

⁸³⁸ Castelli, 2011, pp. 63-64

⁸³⁹ di Ripabottoni, 2010, p. 362

⁸⁴⁰ Campanella, 2011, p. 56

⁸⁴¹ di Flumeri, 1995, p. 129

of drivers who had fallen asleep at the wheel, as happened to a friend of mine, and saved distracted or reckless drivers from grave accidents.”⁸⁴²

Jim Gallagher: “Now I understand what the gospel writer John felt when he wrote: ‘There are many other things that Jesus did. If they were all written down, one by one, I suppose that the whole world could not hold the books that would be written.’”⁸⁴³

Mons. Raffaele Pellicchia, Archbishop of Sorrento and Castellammare di Stabia: “The glorification of Padre Pio is the clearest answer that the Church of the Ecumenical Council gives to the modern age, because the joys and the hopes, the sadness and anguish of humankind today, especially of the poor and the suffering, were also his joys and hopes, sadness and anguish. And anything that was genuinely human echoed in his heart.”⁸⁴⁴

⁸⁴² di Flumeri, 1996, II, p. 1107

⁸⁴³ Gallagher, 1995, p. 228

⁸⁴⁴ Peroni, 2002, p. 542

21 Padre Pio's frail health, high fevers, and his gift of tears

Padre Rosario da Aliminusa: "Padre Pio always seemed to be at the extreme limits of his strength, and perpetually at the point of death."⁸⁴⁵

Rev. Bernard Ruffin: "Since childhood Padre was plagued by ill-defined physical problems. He suffered from intestinal irritability, inability to retain solid food for weeks and months on end, spasms of violent coughing, excruciating headaches, and unusually high temperatures. Some days he would seem to be reduced to the point of death, only to recover just as suddenly. In 1908 in Montefusco a doctor made the devastating diagnosis of pulmonary tuberculosis, and he had to be sent home to prevent contagion. At home, Dr. Andrea Cardone refused to give that diagnosis, and suggested that he see a specialist in Naples. In Naples the doctors were not able to say what the matter was. He went back to Montefusco, but he was soon seized by violent stomach cramps and persistent vomiting, and had to be sent home again. Each time he returned home he improved. He could not remain a single day at any friary without suffering a relapse. Padre Benedetto obtained for him a dispensation to live at home, with the Capuchin habit, and complete his studies privately. But he started feeling ill even in Pietrelcina. In March of 1910 he had continuous fevers, cough, pain in the chest and back. In April he was confined to bed. In May he had chest pains. In July the pains increased."⁸⁴⁶

Mons. Raffaello Rossi: "For his studies, he went from convent to convent, however, many times the state of his health forced him to go back to Pietrelcina to breathe his native air. He was said to suffer from bronchial pneumonia; in reality, the medical exams never confirmed this positively."⁸⁴⁷

Padre Luigi recalls the following: "What I observed was that he would fall ill periodically, and sweat in an extraordinary manner."⁸⁴⁸ "Padre Pio fell seriously ill on the feast of the Immaculate in 1919, and on May 5th 1920. We thought he was going to die. The rumor had spread that he would die at the age of thirty-three, the age he was about to enter. Instead, he healed dramatically and got better."⁸⁴⁹

Padre Nazareno noted in 1916 during the time when Padre Pio was at Foggia, in St. Anna's convent: "He got a bad fever of 41°C (105.8°F) degrees and higher. I called Dr. Del Prete, he found infiltration in the apices of both lungs and ordered complete isolation. Dr. Tarallo was called in for consultation and he diagnosed the same thing. Both doctors would come to visit Padre Pio every evening. They were puzzled and were unable to establish a diagnosis, saying that this must have been a special disorder, because the symptoms would arise and subside in rapid succession. The fever persisted for several days and then suddenly disappeared, to the great confusion of the doctors. In summary, both doctors

⁸⁴⁵ Napolitano, 1979, p. 99

⁸⁴⁶ Ruffin, 1991, p. 71

⁸⁴⁷ Castelli, 2011, p. 10

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 172

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 176

concluded that he didn't have tuberculosis. The same conclusion had been reached by Dr. Cardona in Pietrelcina."^{850 851 852}

Padre Marciano Morra: During a conference at the Casa Sollievo on May 15th 1956, Prof. V. Ewans from London told Padre Carmelo: "For us doctors, Padre Pio should be biologically dead. A human being simply cannot work so many hours, lose so much blood, and live on such little food, rest, and vacation time. According to the scientific understanding of the basic needs for survival, Padre Pio should be biologically dead."⁸⁵³

Padre Pio's high fevers

During Padre Pio's time, body temperature was usually determined using mercury thermometers which are no longer in common use. Normal body temperature is 98.2°F (or 36.8°C). A temperature at or above about 104°F (40 °C) requires treatment. Padre Pio had long bouts of high fevers, inexplicable mystical fevers, followed by normal temperatures.⁸⁵⁴

Padre Pio himself said that at times his temperature rose to 118.4°F. He said: "That happens when I am ill. But the illness is of a spiritual rather than a physical nature."⁸⁵⁵ He said that such fevers occurred when he had "some representation of the Lord", and described the experience as like being "in a furnace, though still always conscious".⁸⁵⁶

A friar attested that, "even under the strain of this fever, Padre Pio is not knocked down, but gets up, moves about, and can do everything."⁸⁵⁷ The fact that there was no evidence of delirium or of other mental disturbances during such high temperatures remains inexplicable.⁸⁵⁸

When Padre Pio was in the military hospital in Naples in 1915, he continued to suffer fevers with extraordinarily high temperatures, a phenomenon that he and his colleagues in the monastery had become used to, but which were completely new to the medical and nursing staff.⁸⁵⁹

During a routine physical examination at the Trinity Military Hospital in Naples in December 1915, Padre Pio's temperature was taken by Dr. Giuseppe Grieco, a lieutenant medical doctor in the Italian Army. It so happened that an armpit mercury thermometer cracked within one minute of being placed in Padre Pio's armpit. The thermometer was calibrated to read temperatures up to a maximum of 42°C (107.6°F). Three other attempts to read Padre Pio's temperature resulted in the cracking of three other thermometers in the same way.

⁸⁵⁰ Chiocchi, 1967, I, pp. 84-90

⁸⁵¹ Gianluigi, 2010, p. 97

⁸⁵² Chiron, 1999, pp. 89-90

⁸⁵³ Morcaldi, 2013, pp. 243-244

⁸⁵⁴ Malatesta, 1999, p. 49

⁸⁵⁵ Castelli, 2011, p. 127

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 127

⁸⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 127

⁸⁵⁸ Parente, 1968, p. 29

⁸⁵⁹ Gallagher 1995, p. 73

Dr. Grieco called in a colleague Dr. Francesco Melle. They decided to try with a bath thermometer calibrated to read up to 80°C (176°F) that had been removed from its casing. The thermometer registered 48°C (118.4°F). They couldn't believe the reading, so they decide to use a laboratory precision thermometer. This time the temperature reading reached 49°C (120.2°F).

They decided to inform the Chief of hospital's medical services, Dr. Felice D'Onofrio. He personally measured Padre Pio's temperature and again it registered 49°C. He exclaimed: "This is a mystery! This is impossible! I cannot believe my eyes! He should be in agony. This man is either a saint or a devil."

Dr. D'Onofrio prescribed quinine and re-visited Padre Pio the next morning. When he took the temperature again, and was 36.7°C (98.06°F). He commented: "I don't understand any of this. Let us send him home to die in peace."^{860 861}

As part of a medical examination in 1920, Dr. Giorgio Festa took Padre Pio's temperature. It registered at 48.5°C.

Padre Alberto D'Apolito reported that in 1920, "I took Padre Pio's temperature several times, and it would register between 46°C and 47°C (114.8°F – 116.6°F)."⁸⁶²

In 1921 Padre Lorenzo, superior of the convent, testified under oath to Mons. Rossi that although he was initially skeptical, he had personally witnessed Padre Pio's fevers, and had recorded temperature levels of 43°C (109.4°F), then 45°C (113°F) degrees, and finally 48°C (118.4°F).^{863 864}

Padre Pio himself wrote on February 8th 1917: "I have been sick with pneumonia, with very high fevers."⁸⁶⁵ The fevers in fact exceeded 42°C, the maximum recordable using a normal thermometer, because the thermometers cracked when used on Padre Pio. During a similar episode, on January 27th 1917, the superior of the convent, Padre Paolino da Casacalenda, decided to take Padre Pio's temperature personally. The mercury climbed to 108°F, than broke the bulb of the thermometer. Padre Paolino hurried to the bathroom and fetched a bath thermometer, freed it from the wooden sheath, and placed it under Pio's armpit. The temperature soared to 125.5°F.⁸⁶⁶

Padre Paolino reported: "When I removed the thermometer from Padre Pio's armpit, it had reached 52°C. Fifty-two degrees! Well, I looked at Padre Pio. He didn't seem in bad shape. I put my hand on his forehead. It was not hot. His color was that of somebody who had no fever."^{867 868}

In 1947, Padre Dominic Meyer, from Belleville, Illinois was sent to the Convent at San Giovanni Rotondo to take care of the more than 250 letters Padre Pio received daily in English and German. He attended to that task for the next thirteen years. In September

⁸⁶⁰ All00, 178-84

⁸⁶¹ Cap12, 168

⁸⁶² Alb07, 69

⁸⁶³ Cas11, 126-7

⁸⁶⁴ Cas11, 153

⁸⁶⁵ Epist I, 866

⁸⁶⁶ Ruf91, 134

⁸⁶⁷ da Casacalenda, 1978, p. 86

⁸⁶⁸ Chiron, 1999, p. 100

1949, Padre Dominic described a bout with *sister fever* in which Padre Pio's temperature was measured by Dr. Sanguinetti using a special thermometer at 114°F.

Padre Ezechia Cardone testified that on the last Sunday of August 1945, the superior ordered that Padre Pio's temperature be taken by Dr Avenia. After a few seconds, the thermometer broke because the temperature was too high.

Padre Pio's gift of tears

Padre Pellegrino: "When Padre Pio prepared himself for confession, he invoked Our Lady and often wept. He cried so many tears that with these alone, he could have atoned for all of his sins. I told him as much on one occasion when I saw that he was weeping. He then said to me: "So now I need to ask for your permission in order to cry for my sins?"⁸⁶⁹

Padre Eusebio was confessing Padre Pio. When Padre Pio had completed the confession, he burst in tears. Padre Eusebio exclaimed: "I can't see any proportion between the sins that you have confessed and your display of such pain and sorrow!" Padre Pio responded: "Son, I am the biggest sinner on this earth!" And he continued to cry sorrowfully.⁸⁷⁰

Padre Antonino testified: "In Sant'Elia a Pianisi, at the time of the common prayers, and especially after Communion, brother Pio shed so many tears that they made a little pit in the pavement. We asked him why he wept so much, but he never told us. As I was his spiritual director, on one occasion I asked him under obedience why he wept. He replied: "I cry for my sins, and the sins of everybody."

Brother Leo (Fra' Leone) was a classmate of Padre Pio from 1903 to 1908. He testified: "While praying, Padre Pio was always crying silently, and so abundant were his tears that they left traces on the stone pavement of the choir. We would often make fun of him. So he made it a practice of lying face down on the floor with a large handkerchief over his face. After he had completed his prayers, we could see that his handkerchief was completely saturated. You could have squeezed the tears out of it!"^{871 872 873}

Padre Damaso da Sant'Elia a Pianisi gave a similar testimony.⁸⁷⁴ Padre Antonio da San Giovanni Rotondo, reported the same. When he asked Brother Pio why he was crying, he received the following answer: "I cry for my sins and those of mankind."⁸⁷⁵

Padre Placido undertook the novitiate with Padre Pio in 1902. Each of the novices was assigned a stall for meditation. They noticed that while meditating, Fra Pio cried abundantly. One day he and the other novices jokingly asked the future Padre Pio: "Why is your place in the choir always wet and ours dry?" Padre Placido reported that from that day on, Fra Pio spread his large handkerchief onto the floor in front to him. It was always soaked with tears after each meditation.⁸⁷⁶

⁸⁶⁹ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 43

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 44

⁸⁷¹ Winowska, 1988, pp. 134-135

⁸⁷² Ingoldsby, 1975, p. 24

⁸⁷³ di Flumeri, 1996, III/1, p. 50

⁸⁷⁴ da Ripabottoni, 2010, p. 33

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 33

⁸⁷⁶ Capobianco, 2006, pp. 136-137

Dr. Franco Lotti found Padre Pio crying in his room. He asked why he was weeping. Padre Pio replied: "I am crying at the thought of when I will have to be in God's presence."⁸⁷⁷

Padre Pio would often say: "Good works are the fruit of many tears and of a lot of suffering."

Francesco Napolitano reported: "Padre Pio never failed to cry whenever he celebrated the Divine Sacrifice."⁸⁷⁸

Padre Pio once lamented: "I have committed so many sins! Think that from birth, on May 25th 1887 until my investiture on January 23rd 1903, I never thanked the Lord for having been baptized so quickly, just fourteen hours after my birth, at 8 am on the following morning. I am an ungrateful wretch!" And he continued crying.⁸⁷⁹

⁸⁷⁷ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 42

⁸⁷⁸ Napolitano, 1979, p. 53

⁸⁷⁹ Winowska, 1988, p. 174

22 Padre Pio's daily life

*"I have great distress in meeting the daily needs of eating, drinking, and sleeping.
I do it only because the Lord wants it."*⁸⁸⁰

Padre Pio's eating and drinking habits

To eat very little was a constant in Padre Pio's life.⁸⁸¹

Padre Agostino observed: "He eats about 20 grams of food every 24 hours."⁸⁸²

Padre Roberto da Nove made the following comments: "Padre Pio eats nothing for breakfast or dinner. For lunch, he normally has boiled vegetables, fruits in season, and occasionally an egg."⁸⁸³ "Sometimes he has a hot chocolate for dinner."⁸⁸⁴ "There are periods when he can't keep anything down, moments when he takes a small quantity of food which later he cannot tolerate."⁸⁸⁵ "Many evenings, he doesn't eat anything at all."⁸⁸⁶

Padre Romolo da San Marco in Lamis: "He doesn't eat much. He eats rather sparingly. He eats just a small portion of everything. He eats more or less a third of what I eat."^{887 888}

Padre Pio confided to his nephew Mario Pennelli: "In forty years, I have been unable to eat even half a loaf of bread."^{889 890}

Padre Alberto: "Padre Pio had some very hard biscuits and roasted chick peas in the pantry drawer. Instead of the food brought to him, he would often put one or the other into his mouth, and chew very slowly, giving everyone the impression that he was eating." "It was truly amazing how he could bear up in the confessional for so many hours with so little nourishment."^{891 892}

Dr. Pavone. "Padre Pio ate very little. He would go to the refectory under obedience once a day. In medical terms, the nourishment taken by Padre Pio was absolutely insufficient to sustain life. These things are against the natural law, against everything. Nevertheless, they happened."⁸⁹³

⁸⁸⁰ Epistolario I, p. 107

⁸⁸¹ Castelli, 2011, p. 69

⁸⁸² di Flumeri, 1996, I, 1, p. 569

⁸⁸³ Castelli, 2011, p. 69

⁸⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 88

⁸⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 89

⁸⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 175

⁸⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 88

⁸⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 182

⁸⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 69

⁸⁹⁰ Galeone, 2009, p. 46

⁸⁹¹ Castelli, 2011, p. 88

⁸⁹² Alberto, 2007, p. 100

⁸⁹³ Schug, 1987, pp. 34-35

Fra' Modestino: "Padre Pio ate very little. Some days he ate nothing at all. One Christmas day, he took an espresso coffee. He said: 'It's Christmas so it's time to celebrate.' Once in a while, he enjoyed a slice of pork liver, or artichokes or turnips sent from Pietrelcina"⁸⁹⁴

Fra' Modestino reported: "One day Padre Pio told me: My son, pray for me. My belly is swollen and hurts. Today I ate only 30 grams of food."⁸⁹⁵ On another occasion Padre Pio told Fra' Modestino: "The greatest favor I could get from the superior would be that I be dispensed from eating."^{896 897}

Padre Dominic Meyer: "He also ate macaroni, cheese, peas, beans, fruit, liver, fried sausage, dried ham, and as all good Italians, he drank a glass of wine. But everything was eaten in minute quantities. Frequently he handed much of the food that was served to him to the friar next to him."⁸⁹⁸

Padre Nazareno d'Arpaise: "In Foggia Padre Pio was prepared special meals. He would just taste the food and then pass it to the other friars. I asked him: "Piuccio don't you know that you have tuberculosis?" "Yes?" he said. I continued: "Then why do you give your food to other friars? Don't you know that your disease is highly contagious?" He replied: "Yes, but by special disposition of the Lord, my disease is not contagious."^{899 900}

Padre Damaso da Sant'Elia reported: "Once, he spent twenty days without eating."⁹⁰¹

Padre Pio said that he was nourished solely by the Eucharist: "It is the Lord who does this and not I. It is the Lord who is working in me."⁹⁰²

Padre Raffaele testified at the Process: "One day he fell ill. We took his weight. It was 83 kilos. He spent three days in bed without touching any food the whole time. When he got up recovered, he weighed 86 kilos. He had put on three kilos without eating anything for three days."⁹⁰³

Padre Pio's sleeping habits

Padre Pio slept with just a sheet and a light plaid, as he couldn't stand heavy blankets.⁹⁰⁴

Padre Pio asked a young man how long he had slept the previous night. "Six or seven hours." Padre Pio replied: "That's as much as I sleep in a year."⁹⁰⁵

⁸⁹⁴ Modestino, 2001, pp. 29-30, p. 32, pp. 50-51

⁸⁹⁵ di Flumeri, 1996, II, p. 147

⁸⁹⁶ Modestino, 2001, p. 30

⁸⁹⁷ di Flumeri, II, p. 147

⁸⁹⁸ Ruffin, 1991, p. 289

⁸⁹⁹ Giannuzzo, 2012, p. 97

⁹⁰⁰ Chiron, 1999, p. 89

⁹⁰¹ di Flumeri, 1996, III, 1, p. 816

⁹⁰² Ruffin, 1991, p. 290

⁹⁰³ di Flumeri, 1996, II, p. 1405

⁹⁰⁴ Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 323

⁹⁰⁵ Schug, 1987, p. 35

Padre Pio: "I have great distress in meeting the daily needs of eating, drinking, and sleeping. I do it only because the Lord wants it."⁹⁰⁶

Padre Raffaele: "In his early priestly life he would get up at 3 am. In his later years, generally he would not go to bed at all. When he did go to bed, he would set the alarm at 3 am. He would sleep for about three hours at most."⁹⁰⁷

Padre Eusebio: "He would get up very early in the morning, clean his wounds and start to say the rosary and pray and meditate."⁹⁰⁸

A typical day for Padre Pio

Padre Roberto da Nove, testified in 1920: "Padre Pio gets up at the same time as the rest of the community, at 5:30 am. He hears confessions until 10 am, when he celebrates Holy Mass. After Mass, he returns to his cell for the thanksgiving prayer. He then goes down to the sacristy to listen to those who wish to talk to him and to receive his blessing. They are many and come from all the regions of Italy and from abroad. It takes great patience to listen to so many miseries and to welcome so many sick and desperate souls who ask for help, confidence, faith, peace. At noon he has lunch in the refectory of the small minor seminary of which he is the spiritual director. His menu consists of boiled vegetables, fruit in season, and occasionally an egg. This is all that he eats in a day. He eats nothing else, either in the morning or in the evening. During the evening, he usually stays a while to converse with the community."⁹⁰⁹

Padre Raffaele: "During his early priestly life, he would get up at 3 am. He would celebrate Mass whenever his superiors asked him to. His superior often had to call him out of the confessional to go to the refectory. Otherwise, he would be hearing confessions all the time. He ate very little. He would just take a nibble. Then he would return to hear confessions until the Angelus at 6 pm. He never came to supper in the evening. During his later years, he would generally not go to bed at all. After the earthquake of 1939 he slept in an ambulance that was parked in the friary garden for almost a month."⁹¹⁰

Padre Pio's self-scourging: The "discipline"

When he was ten years old Francesco started scourging himself in order to imitate Jesus, who had been beaten by the Jews.⁹¹¹

During the novitiate year in Morcone, the community as a whole took the "discipline" on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The friars and novices went to the choir, pulled the habit from their backs and struck themselves on the bare flesh with a chain. During the discipline they were to think of the Passion of Jesus."⁹¹² "There was always blood on the floor after these religious exercises."⁹¹³

⁹⁰⁶ Epistolario I, p. 107

⁹⁰⁷ Schug, 1987, p. 98

⁹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 120

⁹⁰⁹ Castelli, 2011, pp. 68-69

⁹¹⁰ Schug, 1987, pp. 97-100

⁹¹¹ di Flumeri, 1996, I, 1, p. 606

⁹¹² Ruffin, 1991, p. 51

⁹¹³ Duchess Suzanne, 1983, p. 36

In Pietrelcina, Padre Pio continued to observe the “discipline” on the customary days, striking himself with a metal chain until the blood ran.⁹¹⁴

One evening Don Giuseppe Orlando observed that Padre Pio was having difficulty sitting still, as though he was in pain or in great discomfort. Don Giuseppe asked if he was in difficulty. Padre Pio replied: “You know Peppino, today is Friday. On Friday evenings, we friars take the discipline. I must have given a blow too many to this old back.”⁹¹⁵

⁹¹⁴ Ruffin, 1991, p. 97

⁹¹⁵ di Flumeri, 1995, p. 136

23 Padre Pio's poetical gems

*Mary Ingoldsby: "Padre Pio wasn't a literary genius. There is no literary style in his Letters, although at times he is like a poet, lyrical in the way he launches out into a description. But in his later letters he says things that are literary gems."*⁹¹⁶

"The halcyon is a little bird that nests on the beach. He builds the nest in a round shape, so tightly compressed that water cannot permeate it. The nest has an opening on top, so that the little birds can breathe fresh air. The nests are able to float without sinking or filling with seawater. Those little balls never overturn. Your hearts may be similar, tight on every side, so that they are not penetrated by the storms of the world, of the flesh, and of the devil. And there is only the opening on top by which to breathe and aspirate Jesus."⁹¹⁷

"You should be like the oranges of Genoa's Riviera. Throughout the whole year, they are full of fruits, flowers, and leaves."⁹¹⁸

"It is very easy to row a boat when it is not shaken by winds. But it is very difficult to do so when the winds are blowing."⁹¹⁹

"Scruples are like tight shoes. You can't walk in them. Despise them."⁹²⁰

"Our body is like a donkey. We beat him, but with some consideration. Otherwise he throws himself on the ground and will not carry us anymore."⁹²¹

"Whether one drowns on the high seas or chokes on a glass of water, the outcome, death, is the same."^{922 923}

"With repeated strokes of a chisel, and by diligent polishing, the divine artist prepares the stones that will be used to build the eternal building."^{924 925}

"How can a physician heal a sore or a wound if you don't reveal it to him?"⁹²⁶

"The tall ears of grain are vain and empty; the ones bent to the ground are humble and laden with grain."^{927 928 929}

⁹¹⁶ Schug, 1987, p. 134

⁹¹⁷ Epistolario IV, pp. 444-445

⁹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 440

⁹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 433

⁹²⁰ Castelli, 2011, p. 280

⁹²¹ De Liso, 1962, p. 48

⁹²² Ibid., p. 55

⁹²³ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 13

⁹²⁴ Epistolario II, p. 87

⁹²⁵ Epistolario I, p. 329

⁹²⁶ Epistolario IV, p. 443

⁹²⁷ Gaudiose, 1974, p. 191

⁹²⁸ Del Fante, 1950, p. 552

⁹²⁹ Padre Pio, 2010, pp. 96-97

"I act as the workers do at harvest time: They beat the sheaves to separate the wheat from the straw. Then they winnow the wheat to eliminate the straw and leave the wheat behind."⁹³⁰

"The mother teaches her child to walk by supporting him. But later he has to walk by himself."⁹³¹

"In the spiritual life, the faster we run, the less tired we feel."⁹³²

"If you are unable to take big steps, be content with small steps until you have the legs to run - or the wings to fly."⁹³³

"Keep going forward. If you stop, the wind will blow you back."⁹³⁴

"As the pearls are held together by the thread, so too the virtues are held together by charity"⁹³⁵

"The pearls fall when the thread breaks, and the virtues are lost if charity diminishes."⁹³⁶

"Do not care about tomorrow. Do good deeds today. And when tomorrow comes, it will be called today, and then you can care about it."⁹³⁷

"Trust in Providence. Like the people of Israel in the desert, it's necessary to stock up manna for one day only." (Ex.16,33).⁹³⁸

"What should we say to a poor peasant intent in observing a river flowing at great speed? Perhaps we would laugh at him, and with good reason. It is folly to try to fix our gaze on something that is rapidly passing. This is the state of a person fixing his eye on visible things."^{939 940}

Padre Pio told Katharina Tangari: "Every Christian denomination in the world feeds off the Catholic Church. Our Holy Catholic Church is like a great and extremely precious unpolished diamond from which every so often, somebody takes a particle and polishes it – not without the help of the evil one – so that it begins to shine more brightly than the great unpolished diamond. And this shine draws men, dazzles them and deceives them, so that the particle necessarily wears out and comes to nothing. This is the game of deception which appears and reappears throughout history. Jesus warned us to watch out for it."⁹⁴¹

⁹³⁰ lasenzaniro, 2006, pp. 31-32

⁹³¹ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 16

⁹³² Ibid., p. 14

⁹³³ Ibid., p. 228

⁹³⁴ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 26

⁹³⁵ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 135

⁹³⁶ Ibid., p. 135

⁹³⁷ Epistolario IV, p. 437

⁹³⁸ Ibid., pp. 437-438

⁹³⁹ Epistolario II, p. 190

⁹⁴⁰ Dun Bertanzetti, 1999, p. 144

⁹⁴¹ Tangari, 1996. p. 60

Pietruccio the blind reported: “Padre Pio wanted me to confess every eight days. He used to say: ‘A housewife who has a beautiful piece of furniture dusts it every day. She always finds some speck of dust. We must do the same with our souls.’”⁹⁴²

To Padre Benedetto, March 26th 1914: “For some time the Lord God has given very great gifts to my soul. . . My soul experiences what would happen to a poor shepherd if he was introduced into a royal chamber which holds an endless number of precious things, things that he has never seen before. When the shepherd leaves the chamber, he will certainly have all of the beautiful and precious objects in his mind’s eye, but he will not be able to tell their number or give them their proper name. He would like to tell others of what he has seen. He would call upon all of his intellectual and scientific powers in order to do so. But knowing that he would not be understood, he prefers better to be silent.”⁹⁴³

⁹⁴² Iasenzaniro, 2006. pp. 352-353

⁹⁴³ Epistolario I, pp. 461-462

24 Padre Pio's humor: His anecdotes, jokes and stories

"Keep an attitude of holy joyousness that gives encouragement to others."

"When I am dead I will make an even bigger din than when I was alive."

Padre Pio's quips are difficult to translate because they were expressed in the Neapolitan dialect of the countryside and very often involved a play on words.

The clowns

Two nursing students in miniskirts were told that if they wanted to confess to Padre Pio they needed to wear longer clothes. They did, and looking in the mirror one of them said: "We just look like clowns." When Padre Pio arrived, he looked at the line of people waiting and told the friar who was accompanying him: "I am not going to confess those two clowns."⁹⁴⁴

A girl in a miniskirt was told that a longer dress was needed if she wanted to confess with Padre Pio. She went to a store with her mother to buy appropriate clothes. Looking at herself in the mirror trying on a new dress, she said to her mother: "If my boyfriend could see me he would think I was a clown." When her turn came and the grate opened, she heard: "Go away! I don't confess clowns."⁹⁴⁵

The birds

In 1916 Padre Pio was talking at a meeting of Franciscan tertiaries at the Ventrella home. A goldfinch in the cage kept interrupting him with its persistent chirping. Padre Pio said: "Quiet! You listen too!" The bird immediately stopped, and resumed only when Padre Pio was leaving the meeting.⁹⁴⁶

Dr. Nicola Centra and several other people were conversing with Padre Pio in the garden on a summer afternoon. They couldn't hear each other because of the number of birds singing in the trees. Padre Pio turned towards the trees and said: "Enough now." Dr. Centra later reported: "The birds obeyed Padre Pio."⁹⁴⁷

Anecdotes

Countess Rina Telfner was wearing a hat. Padre Pio: "Do you think you are prettier with that thing on your head?" She stopped wearing hats.⁹⁴⁸

⁹⁴⁴ las06, 152

⁹⁴⁵ las06, 152

⁹⁴⁶ Cov07, 27-8

⁹⁴⁷ Cov07, 141-2

⁹⁴⁸ las06, 148

Cleonice Morcaldi once said to Padre Pio: 'Padre, you suffer so much because you had the imprudence of offering yourself for the whole humanity'. Padre Pio replied: "Well, a fool was needed for this."^{949 950}

The stolen horse

In the early days, and on at least one occasion, Padre Pio good humoredly co-opted Padre Paolino, the superior of the convent, to share in the responsibility for "making miracles". One day, a peasant knocked at the friary door. Padre Pio opened, and the peasant asked for "the friar who works miracles". Padre Pio led him to Padre Paolino's room and remained outside eavesdropping.

The peasant said to Padre Paolino: "You know everything. My horse has been stolen. You have to tell me who stole it." Padre Paolino replied: "The proverb says: 'He who knows your habits enters and steals.'" The peasant left. He returned eight days later with a gift of cheese for Padre Paolino. He said to him: "When I got back home, I thought over your words and singled out who knew my habits well. I went to his house and said: 'You stole my horse. The friar who works miracles told me so.' At these words, he gave me back my horse."

Padre Paolino would often joke with Padre Pio: "You are not the only one who works miracles."⁹⁵¹

A friar once offered a sugared almond to Padre Pio. He accepted it and started chewing it. He was then accompanied towards the sacristy to hear the confession of men. When they reached the door, he said: "Don't open the door yet. Let me finish this candy. Otherwise they will say: 'What kind of saint is this, if he eats candies?'"⁹⁵²

Carlo Campanini said to his doctor in Florence: "Tomorrow I'm going to see Padre Pio." The doctor replied: "He is a hysteric who got the wounds by thinking too much about Jesus on the Cross."

When Campanini met with Padre Pio in San Giovanni Rotondo, Padre Pio said to him: "When you see your doctor, tell him to think intensely about being a bull. Let us see if he starts growing horns."⁹⁵³

Padre Pio had not been feeling well and the friars tried to convince him to go to the *Casa Sollievo* as an inpatient. He said: "What do you think the doctors know!" "But you have created a hospital!" "Yes, but the hospital is for sick people, not for the doctors!"^{954 955}

A person once confessed: "Father I have only committed light sins." Padre Pio retorted: "Did you weigh them on the pharmacist's scale?"⁹⁵⁶

A woman told Padre Pio that her doctor had recommended that she undergo shock treatment. Padre Pio replied: "If you are not crazy already, you surely will be after shock treatments."⁹⁵⁷

⁹⁴⁹ Morcaldi, 2013, p. 97

⁹⁵⁰ Duchess Suzanne, 1968, p. 20

⁹⁵¹ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 168-169

⁹⁵² Parente, 2011b, pp. 126-127

⁹⁵³ Cataneo, 1991, p. 186

⁹⁵⁴ Capuano, 2012, p. 398

⁹⁵⁵ Napolitano, 1979, p. 198

⁹⁵⁶ Capuano, 2012, p. 396

⁹⁵⁷ Napolitano, 1979, pp. 208-209

Dr. Festa reported the following: “A colleague of mine asked Padre Pio: ‘Why are the lesions here and not in other parts of your body?’ Padre Pio answered: ‘You are a doctor. You should tell me why they should have been in other parts of the body and not here.’”⁹⁵⁸
⁹⁵⁹ Dr. Festa’s colleague was Dr. Bignami.^{960 961}

A person once complained to Padre Pio: “Padre my leg is not doing well.” “Lucky you!” replied Padre Pio: “Both of my legs are in bad shape.”^{962 963}

Padre Pio once commented to a doctor: “Do you know why you doctors never go on strike? Because if you went on strike, people would soon realize that without you, they get better, and they get better faster.”⁹⁶⁴

Rina Giordanelli went to see Padre Pio with Francesco, one of her children. When they saw Padre Pio, Francesco was munching on a chocolate given to him by a friar. Padre Pio asked him: “Will you give it to me.” The child said “No!” and hid the chocolate behind his back. An onlooker said to the child: “How can you dare to say no to Padre Pio? Give it to him!” Padre Pio said to the onlooker: “What do you mean? I gave him the chocolate, and now he has to give it back to me?” Padre Pio lied to avoid embarrassment of the child.⁹⁶⁵

A woman once said to Padre Pio: “Father, my friend asked me to tell you that she has not been feeling well for the past two years. What should I say to her?” Padre Pio immediately replied: “Tell her that I have not been feeling well for the past seventy years.”⁹⁶⁶

In 1959, Padre Pio was shown the newly built church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, just before its inauguration on July 1st. The church was several times larger than the original church. To everybody’s surprise, Padre Pio was not impressed and called it “a mousetrap”. His exact words were: “*Ma che avete fatto! Nu mastrillo? Doveva essere più grande, molto più grande.*” [“What have you made! A mousetrap? It should have been bigger, much bigger.”] On other occasion he called it “a matchbox”⁹⁶⁷

Padre Costantino Capobianco witnessed the following episode. The superior Padre Carmelo had ordered that an air conditioning unit donated by a benefactor be installed in Padre Pio’s room while he was in the confessional. When Padre Pio returned to his room, he asked what it was, and how much it had cost. He said to Padre Tarcisio: “This is an offence against poverty. What will the Seraphic Father Saint Francis say?” Padre Tarcisio replied: “Padre, it’s not your fault. The superior decided to do this without asking you. With your attitude you make people lose their peace.” Padre Pio looked at Padre Costantino who also happened to be present and asked him: “What do *you* say?” Padre Costantino replied: “Padre Tarcisio is right. You didn’t want it. If there is any fault, it certainly is not yours.”

⁹⁵⁸ Winowska, 1988, p. 71

⁹⁵⁹ Capuano, 2012, p. 393

⁹⁶⁰ De Liso, 1962, pp. 79-80

⁹⁶¹ Winowska, 1988, p. 71

⁹⁶² Capuano, 2012, p. 399

⁹⁶³ Napolitano, 1979, p. 199

⁹⁶⁴ Capuano, 2012, p. 391

⁹⁶⁵ Pronzato, 2002, pp. 145-146

⁹⁶⁶ Capuano, 2012, p. 390

⁹⁶⁷ Convento Frati Minori, 2001, p. 218

Padre Pio never turned it on. It became an extra shelf for small objects.⁹⁶⁸

Brother Bill Martin helped Padre Pio in the convent for several years. He reports that one day Padre Pio said to him in a perfect American accent: "Say, would you mind closing that window?"⁹⁶⁹

Jokes and stories

Padre Bernardo showed a letter to Padre Pio. Reading the address, he said: "Pio, you need to respect me. They just made me cardinal. The address says 'His Eminence Padre Bernardo.'" Padre Pio replied: "You have to respect *me* more. This one beats even yours!". Padre Pio then showed him an envelope addressed to "Holy Father Pio da Pietrelcina".⁹⁷⁰

This story was told by Padre Pio: There was a discussion about the relative status of doctors and lawyers, and who should get precedence over the other. The Pope had a suggestion: "Let us follow the same principle that applies when they hang a person: *Praecedant carnesfices, sequantur latrones*. which is to say, the slaughterers go first, and they are followed by the thieves."⁹⁷¹

After Padre Pio's evening prayers, Carlo Campanini joined the choir in singing a hymn to Mary. The refrain was: *to the Heavens I will go and see her one day*. Carlo's voice was somewhat hoarse and crackling. Back in the sacristy soon after, Padre Pio said to Carlo: "Hey you, when it comes to getting to Heaven you are always having a bit of a struggle don't you?"⁹⁷²

Padre Pio used to say jokingly: "Three things are useless: washing a donkey's head, adding water to the ocean, and preaching to nuns, friars, and priests."⁹⁷³

Fra Modestino reported: "One day Padre Pio was coming out of the sacristy. A woman approached him and asked: 'Where is the Holy Father?' Padre Pio replied: 'The Holy Father is in Rome.' Padre Pio then continued on to the door of the friary and left. The woman then asked me: 'Where is the Holy Father?' I answered: 'You were just talking to him.'"⁹⁷⁴

A certain priest celebrated Mass and preached the sermon. Padre Pio was in the audience. After Mass he asked Padre Pio: "What did you think of my sermon?" Padre Pio replied: "Good, but if you kept on much longer you would have been talking to yourself."⁹⁷⁵

Padre Pio was once asked: "What should I say to my sister Rose?" He answered: "Tell her to become a carnation."⁹⁷⁶

⁹⁶⁸ Capobianco, 2006, pp. 242-244

⁹⁶⁹ Ingoldsby, 1978, p. 97

⁹⁷⁰ Capuano, 2012, pp. 387-388

⁹⁷¹ Ibid., p. 388

⁹⁷² Iasenzaniro, 2006, p. 122

⁹⁷³ Napolitano, 1979, p. 198

⁹⁷⁴ Schug, 1987, p. 137

⁹⁷⁵ Keane, 2007, p. 25

⁹⁷⁶ Capuano, 2012, p. 390

Another person once asked: "Padre Pio, will you take me to Paradise, even you will have to grab me by the hair?" Padre Pio replied: "I might need to grab you by the neck, because by then you will have so little hair!"⁹⁷⁷

Barbarossa

The following is a story told by Padre Pio: "Frederick Barbarossa (Holy Roman Emperor of the 12th century) went to a monastery and said to the superior: 'I will come back a year from now, and if you don't know the answer to three questions I will destroy your monastery.' The first question will be: 'What is the distance between the earth and the moon?' The second, 'What is my worth as an emperor?' And the third, 'What am I thinking right now?'

The superior was desperate, but the cook said to him: 'Don't worry, I will answer those questions.' The year passed, the cook put on the vestments of the superior, and Barbarossa came back. 'Do you have the answers?' 'Yes, sire.'

'What is the distance?'. The cook gave an enormous cipher. 'How do you know?' 'I measured it, and if you don't believe it, measure it yourself.' 'All right! What is my worth?' 'Judas sold our lord Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. You must be worth a little less than him, let's say twenty-eight.' 'All right. Now, what am I thinking?' 'You are thinking that you are speaking to the superior when instead you are speaking to the cook!'⁹⁷⁸

The key

Another story told by Padre Pio: "One day Our Lord was making the rounds of Paradise and saw some strange faces. He asked Peter: 'Who let these people in?' Peter replied: 'Nothing to do with me.' The Lord went on: 'But you have the key.' Peter: 'There is nothing I can do, and nothing you can do either.' The Lord then asked: 'What do you mean?' Peter replied: 'It's your mother. Every time I turn my back, she opens the gate and lets somebody in.'^{979 980}

Saint Joseph

"St. Peter saw a man who should not have been in Paradise. He asked: 'Who let you in?' The man answered: 'St. Joseph did.' When St. Peter asked St. Joseph what was going on, he replied: 'He was a carpenter, so I let him in.' St. Peter: 'No exceptions, he has to leave.' St. Joseph: 'If that is the case, Mary get the child and let's leave.' St. Peter, afraid to lose them said: 'Did you say carpenter? Oh, now I remember. There is an exception for carpenters!'^{981 982}

A drunken man once looked at a caterpillar and said: "Oh Lord, why did you give so many feet to this little thing, and you gave only two to me who am unable to stand?"^{983 984}

When Padre Pio had to be operated of hernia in 1925, he refused any anesthesia. Dr. Festa convinced him to take a little glass of Benedictine liqueur. He did reluctantly have a sip of

⁹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 390

⁹⁷⁸ Ruffin, 1991, pp. 415-416

⁹⁷⁹ McCaffery, 1978, p. 140

⁹⁸⁰ Napolitano, 1979, pp. 205-206

⁹⁸¹ Capuano, 2012, p. 393

⁹⁸² Parente, 2011a, pp. 273-276

⁹⁸³ Napolitano, 1979, p. 204

⁹⁸⁴ Capuano, 2012, p. 390

it. When asked to drink a little more, he said to Dr. Festa: "That's enough, otherwise we will have a confrontation between the Benedictine and the Capuchin."⁹⁸⁵

One day after lunch, Padre Pio said to Padre Costantino Capobianco: "You seem to be hearing better than usual. Have you had a device fitted?" Padre Costantino replied that indeed he was wearing a hearing aid. Padre Pio: "Take it off. Let me see it." When he got it into his hand, Padre Pio said to the other friars: "Come on, boys. This is the right time to talk bad about Padre Costantino. He can't hear us now!"^{986 987 988}

When doctors Festa and Romanelli did a joint examination of Padre Pio's wounds in 1920, Padre Pio in his usual jovial manner told them a question and answer joke: "What is it like to be a sick person in between two doctors? It's like being a mouse between two cats!"^{989 990 991}

A joke told by Padre Pio: "A king was coming to inspect the troops and a young recruit was prepared by the sergeant: 'The King will ask you three questions. The first will be: 'How old are you?' You will answer 'Twenty-two years.' Then he will ask: 'How long have you been in the army?' You will answer, 'Two years.' And finally, he will ask: 'Who you like most, your king or your country?' You will answer 'Both.'"

The king came and asked the recruit: 'How many years have you been in the army?' The recruit replied: 'Twenty-two years.' 'How old are you?' 'Two years.' The king got frustrated and said: 'Either one or other of us is stupid.' 'Both your majesty.' Replied the recruit.^{992 993}

Padre Isidoro told Padre Pio: "I have to Casa Sollievo as an inpatient because I have had atrocious headaches for a month now. Pray for me." Padre Pio laughed. A week later, Padre Isidoro came back to Padre Pio. He was all smiles. "They didn't find anything in my head." Padre Pio quipped: "That is something that we all knew already."⁹⁹⁴

During a lightning storm, a friar said to Padre Pio: "Father let's move away from the transformer. Ten people were killed yesterday." Padre Pio replied: "We ran no such risk here. There are only two of us."^{995 996}

Padre Pio was celebrating a wedding and the groom was so emotional that he was unable to say "Yes." Padre Pio asked several times and then added: "Well, when are you going to say yes? Perhaps you want me to marry her?"⁹⁹⁷

⁹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 397

⁹⁸⁶ Cataneo, 1991, p. 188

⁹⁸⁷ Capuano, 2012, p. 395

⁹⁸⁸ Capobianco, 2006, pp. 228-229

⁹⁸⁹ Schug, 1987, p. 31

⁹⁹⁰ Capuano, 2012, p. 393

⁹⁹¹ Napolitano, 1979, p. 198

⁹⁹² Cataneo, 1991, p. 184

⁹⁹³ Napolitano, 1979, pp. 202-203

⁹⁹⁴ da Ripabottoni, 2010a, p. 221

⁹⁹⁵ Cataneo, 1991, p. 185

⁹⁹⁶ Capuano, 2012, p. 390

⁹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 391

The roundtrip train ticket

A farmer who had never traveled was about to take a train for the first time. At the counter, the attendant asked: "Where are you going?" "It's not your business" replied the farmer. "But I need to know before I can issue you a ticket." After some argumentation, the farmer bought a round trip ticket. The train started moving. When it entered a long dark tunnel, he got terribly scared and asked his fellow travelers: "Where are we going?" "We are going to hell" said one of them. The man replied: "I am not worried. I have a roundtrip ticket."^{998 999}

Padre Joseph Pius, Bill Martin before becoming a Capuchin friar reported: "Once I heard that Padre Sexto said to him: 'I wish you another fifty years of life.' Padre Pio replied: 'What harm have I ever done to you?'"¹⁰⁰⁰

One day as Padre Pio was walking through the church, he saw a bricklayer who was working on Padre Pio's tomb carrying some materials down the stairs into the crypt. He asked: "What are you making?" The man was extremely embarrassed and said: "I don't know; perhaps an altar." Padre Pio replied: "Remember that I will be spending very little time down there."

Padre Pio was asked what he thought of the tomb they were building for him. "I think that it's a bit smallish and I will not have much air to breath."¹⁰⁰¹

⁹⁹⁸ Schug, 1987, p. 66

⁹⁹⁹ Capuano, 2012, p. 391

¹⁰⁰⁰ Schug, 1987, p. 65

¹⁰⁰¹ D'Ascanio, 1994, p. 105

25 Padre Pio the priest: Perfect Victim on the altar and in the confessional

Padre Tarcisio once asked Padre Pio: "When did you start suffering?" Padre Pio: "I have been suffering since I was in my mother's womb."¹⁰⁰²

In a letter to spiritual daughter Maria Campanile Padre Pio wrote: "The Lord showed me signs of a very special predilection since the time of my birth."¹⁰⁰³

Gherardo Leone reported: "When talking about his infancy Padre Pio said that he remembered everything about it, including when he still was in the crib."¹⁰⁰⁴

Padre Pio wrote in a letter to Padre Agostino: "The Guardian Angel has been my companion since my infancy." ¹⁰⁰⁵

Even while in the crib, Francesco, the future Padre Pio was able to see devils. Years later he recalled: "When I was in the crib, and my mom extinguished the lamp, I saw those horrible monsters and screamed in terror. Then mom would turn the lamp back on. The monsters disappeared, and I stopped screaming"¹⁰⁰⁶

The devils were constantly lurking around his cradle in the form of hideous terrifying monsters.¹⁰⁰⁷

At the age of three, Francesco began reciting the rosary and other prayers by himself.¹⁰⁰⁸

When he was five years of age, Francesco had the thought and desire to consecrate himself to God forever.¹⁰⁰⁹

The Sacred Heart accepted his offer

One day he felt like not playing with the other kids, and sat in a pew in the church, and Jesus from the tabernacle made a sign with the hand to come to the altar, and put his hand on Francesco's head.¹⁰¹⁰

As a young child, Francesco was reluctant to play with other children. Francesco said to his mother: "I don't want to play with the other kids because they curse".¹⁰¹¹ And on another occasion, "Mom, my companions say bad things and offend Jesus".¹⁰¹²

¹⁰⁰² Peroni, 2002, p. 23

¹⁰⁰³ Epistolario III, p. 1006

¹⁰⁰⁴ Leone, 1976, p. 27

¹⁰⁰⁵ Epistolario I, p. 321

¹⁰⁰⁶ Peroni, 2002, p. 23

¹⁰⁰⁷ Duchesse Suzanne, 1968, p. 23

¹⁰⁰⁸ Castelli, 2011, p. 276

¹⁰⁰⁹ da Ripabottoni, 2010, p. 53

¹⁰¹⁰ da Riese, 2010, p. 50

¹⁰¹¹ Ibid., p. 41

¹⁰¹² da Ripabottoni, 1970, p. 17

At the age of nine years, the future Padre Pio went with his father to Altavilla Irpina for the feast of Saint Pellegrino. While in the church, a young mother, holding her deformed sick child, prayed aloud for his recovery. At one point she approached the altar of Saint Pellegrino, threw the child onto it, and said "If you don't want to heal him, you have to take him back!" As the mother walked away, and to everybody's horror, the child rolled off the altar and fell to the ground. After a few moments, he slowly stood up and began to walk for the first time in his life. He approached his mother, saying that he was hungry. The child had been instantaneously healed.

Padre Raffaele da Sant'Elia a Pianisi reported that many years later, Padre Pio tearfully recounted the episode to him.¹⁰¹³

Don Nicola Caruso, a priest in Pietrelcina, reported that when Francesco went home from school at night he would often find a priest standing in the doorway of his home. The priest would not let Francesco enter the house. Then a barefoot child would appear and make the sign of the cross. The priest immediately disappeared.¹⁰¹⁴

In agreement with the sacristan Michele Peruto, Padre Pio had himself locked in the church, and the sacristan would let him out at a pre-arranged time. Padre Pio wanted to pray and meditate alone.¹⁰¹⁵

At the age of 15 years, Francesco had a vision in which Jesus showed him how, in the future, his life would serve to snatch souls from the devil. He was later to write about the event: "I was suddenly taken by a majestic man of rare beauty, bright as the sun, into a very large field where on one side there were people dressed in white, as white as snow, and on the other side there was a multitude with horrible faces, all dressed in black. The majestic man said: 'You will have to fight as a valiant warrior. I will be close to you. As a reward for the victory, you will receive a splendid crown.' At that point, a giant of a man, horrible in appearance and formidable in presence challenged me to a fight. With the help of the majestic man, I fought and overcame him. Defeated, he was compelled to run away."¹⁰¹⁶

Five days later, while still in a state of shock, Francesco received another vision. He reported: "The night before entering the novitiate I had another vision. I saw Jesus and His Mother who in all their majesty, encouraged me and assured me of their loving protection."¹⁰¹⁷

On August 10th 1910, when 23 years old and at the moment of his ordination to priesthood, Padre Pio renewed the offering of his life, but this time as a *perfect* victim. (The perfection of victimhood was attained by the priestly power to celebrate Mass and to hear confessions.)

The following was inscribed by Padre Pio on the souvenir card of his first Mass: "Jesus, my sigh and my life, with trepidation on this day, I raise You in the mystery of love. May I become the Way, Truth and Life for the world, and for You, a holy priest and a PERFECT VICTIM." P. Pio, Capp.¹⁰¹⁸

¹⁰¹³ da Riese, 2010, p. 46

¹⁰¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 44-45

¹⁰¹⁵ Ibid., p. 42

¹⁰¹⁶ Epistolario I, pp. 1280-1284

¹⁰¹⁷ Ibid., p. 1284

¹⁰¹⁸ Ibid., p. 196

On September 7, 1910, twenty-eight days after offering himself as a perfect victim, Padre Pio received the seal of acceptance. Under obedience to Padre Agostino he wrote: “Yes, I received the stigmata. I was aghast. They were visible, especially in one hand, and I prayed the Lord to remove these visible signs, and they disappeared. But the sharp pain did not go away.”¹⁰¹⁹

Since Padre Pio was bound by the vow of obedience in his capacity as a Capuchin friar, he could not make any self-offering without the approval of his superior, in this case his spiritual director. So, he wrote to him making the request. On November 29th 1910, he wrote to Padre Benedetto, making the following request: “On other occasions I have offered myself to the Lord as a victim for poor sinners and for souls in Purgatory. This desire has grown continuously in my heart, and now it has become a powerful passion. I now wish to make this offering with your authorization.”¹⁰²⁰

Padre Benedetto replied on December 1st 1910: “Make the offering.”¹⁰²¹

During the period between receiving the invisible wounds in 1910, and the time of the appearance of the permanent wounds in 1918, Padre Pio was subject to mysterious illnesses, physical pains, heavenly visions, spiritual aridity, bodily fights with the devils, scruples about supposed wrongdoings in his earlier life, and a terrifying sense of abandonment that theologians call “the dark night of the spirit.” His sweetest consolations were combined with the most atrocious sufferings. It all contributed to a painful and extraordinary purification of Padre Pio’s soul.^{1022 1023}

We have an extraordinary insight in this transformation through Padre Pio’s letters, and also through a manuscript written by himself: *Breve trattato della notte oscura dell’anima* (“A brief treatise on the dark night of the soul”) ¹⁰²⁴

Padre Pio recorded his experiences of spiritual aridity on the back of sixteen used envelopes. These were more in the nature of notes of what was going on, rather than a manual of instruction. Saint John of the Cross went through the same experience, and he called it “The dark night of the soul”.¹⁰²⁵

Padre Pio’s extended dark night of the soul

The following statements by Padre Pio offer powerful representations of his experiences during that difficult time.

February 24th 1911: “The spiritual afflictions proceed at the same pace of the physical ailments.”

March 19th 1911: “The devil continues to wage war, and doesn’t show any signs of giving up.”¹⁰²⁶

¹⁰¹⁹ Epistolario I, p. 669

¹⁰²⁰ Ibid., p. 206

¹⁰²¹ Ibid, p. 207

¹⁰²² da Ripabottoni, 2010, pp. 58-59

¹⁰²³ Rega, 2005, 47-53

¹⁰²⁴ Epistolario IV, pp. 1097-1116

¹⁰²⁵ Ibid., p. 1097

¹⁰²⁶ Epistolario I, p. 215

March 29th 1911: "These days the devil gets up to all kind of tricks. I suffer from terrible headaches to the point that I almost cannot see where to put the pen when I try to write."¹⁰²⁷

March 21st 1912 to Padre Agostino: "From Thursday evening to Saturday, and also on Mondays, it is as though my heart, hands, and feet are painfully pierced by a sword."¹⁰²⁸

April 18th 1912 to Padre Agostino: "There are things that cannot be translated in any human language without losing their profound and celestial meaning. This morning, during the thanksgiving after Mass, the heart of Jesus and mine were fused. There were no longer two hearts beating, but only one. My heart had disappeared like a drop of water absorbed into an ocean."¹⁰²⁹

August 26th 1912 to Padre Agostino: "Oh! What a beautiful thing to become a victim of love."¹⁰³⁰

November 5th 1912 to Padre Agostino: "Jesus made me understand the meaning of being a victim. Jesus wants me to suffer without any support."¹⁰³¹

November 18, 1912: "Jesus, Mary, and my guardian Angel keep encouraging me and repeating to me that: 'the victim necessarily needs to shed all of his blood.'"¹⁰³²

On February 13th 1913 Jesus told Padre Pio: "I will make you suffer, but I will also give the strength to endure it. . . . My son, you would have abandoned me, if I hadn't crucified you. . . . Under the Cross, one learns to love, and I give this experience only to those souls who are dearest to me." ¹⁰³³

March 12th 1913 to Padre Agostino: "Jesus told me: 'I need victims to placate my Father's rage; renew the sacrifice of your entire self to me, and do so without any reservation.'"¹⁰³⁴

In June 1913 to Padre Benedetto: "The Lord shows me my life ahead as in a mirror. It is nothing other than martyrdom."¹⁰³⁵

In a letter on April 25th 1914: "From St. Paul's Letter to the Romans, 9:3: *'For I could wish that I myself were accursed and separated from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kin according to the flesh.'* O Lord, remove me from the book of life, so long as you save my brothers."¹⁰³⁶

June 21st 1914: "I am tired of living, and my soul ardently longs for death."¹⁰³⁷

¹⁰²⁷ Ibid., p. 216

¹⁰²⁸ Ibid., p. 266

¹⁰²⁹ Ibid., p. 273

¹⁰³⁰ Ibid., p. 300

¹⁰³¹ Ibid., p. 311

¹⁰³² Ibid., p. 315

¹⁰³³ Ibid., p. 339

¹⁰³⁴ Ibid., p. 343

¹⁰³⁵ Ibid., p. 368

¹⁰³⁶ Epistolario II, pp. 80-81

¹⁰³⁷ Ibid., p. 117

September 4th 1915 to Padre Agostino: "I feel as though all of my bones have been disjoined, crushed, and mangled."¹⁰³⁸

March 23rd 1916 to Padre Agostino: "Darkness is followed by more darkness. It has become pitch dark for me. When will the sun rise for me?"¹⁰³⁹

March 23rd 1916 to Padre Agostino: "I am tired of living. I abhor this world as much as Jesus abhors sin."¹⁰⁴⁰

May 30th 1918 to Padre Benedetto: "I renewed the offer of all of myself. After that I felt as though I had fallen in this hard prison, and heard the crash of the door slamming behind me and felt bound as by tight shackles. It was like losing my life. From that moment on, I have felt as though I am in hell."¹⁰⁴¹

From August 5th – 7th 1918, continuing his ascend towards the transforming union with God, Padre Pio received an extraordinary "stroke of love" - the Transverberation. He described the event as follows: "The evening of the fifth a celestial person, holding a very long sharp pointed steel blade which seemed to emit fire, hurled it into my soul with all his might. This all happened in a split second. Everything in my interior felt lashed by fire and steel. I felt that I was dying. The agony continued without ceasing until the morning of August 7th. From that moment on I feel the presence of an open wound which causes me to suffer continual pain."¹⁰⁴²

On September 20th 1918, between 9 and 10 in the morning, Padre Pio received the supreme seal of the *Perfect Victim*, and joined permanently in the Passion of Christ on the Cross through the stigmata wounds. Padre Pio describes the actual stigmatization in a letter to Padre Benedetto on October 22, 1918: "I was in the choir after Mass. Suddenly I was wrapped in a sea of blazing light. In that light I saw a mysterious individual, similar to the one I had seen the evening of August 5th. His hands, feet and side were dripping blood. His wounds emitted rays of very bright white light that penetrated my hands, my feet, and my side. They were like blades of fire that penetrated my skin piercing, cutting, and breaking. I felt that I would die. The pain was immense. The wounds were bleeding, especially the one on my chest, alongside my heart. I had barely the strength to drag myself to the cell in order to clean my clothes that were all soaked in blood. Oh my God, how much confusion and humiliation I feel in having to show what You have done in this poor creature of yours!"¹⁰⁴³

In a letter to Padre Benedetto a month later on October 17th 1918, Padre Pio asked that Padre Benedetto pray that the wounds be removed: "Please help me! All of my interior rains blood and I am forced to see it flow out of my body. I beg that this torment, this condemnation, this humiliation, this confusion stops!"¹⁰⁴⁴

¹⁰³⁸ Epistolario I, p. 640

¹⁰³⁹ Ibid., p. 333

¹⁰⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 333

¹⁰⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 1053-1054

¹⁰⁴² Ibid., p. 1065

¹⁰⁴³ Epistolario I, pp. 1093-1095

¹⁰⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 1090-1091

Nailed to the Cross for fifty years

On January 22nd 1953, Padre Pio celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his entrance in the Capuchin order. He reflected: "Fifty years of religious life, fifty years nailed to the cross, fifty years of devouring fire: for You, O Lord, for your redeemed. My soul desires nothing other than to bring them all to You. I patiently wait for this devouring fire to burn me up completely in the desire of dying."¹⁰⁴⁵

"Aren't you satisfied with how much I have suffered?"

On May 25th 1968, Fra' Modestino was in Padre Pio's cell. Padre Pio said: "Boy, do you want to know what happened this morning? A little old woman said to me: "You must live for another hundred years! How will we manage without you?" I replied: "Aren't you satisfied with how much I have suffered? Are you are wishing me more suffering instead of wishing that I go to God?"¹⁰⁴⁶

"I offer my daily suffering for you"

In a letter sent to Pope Paul VI on September 12th 1968, Padre Pio wrote: "I offer my prayers and my daily suffering for you so that the Lord will comfort you with his grace and enable you to continue defending the eternal truth that never changes, even though the times may change. I thank you for your clear words in the *"Humanae Vitae"* (the encyclical letter 'Of human life') and confirm my faith and my unconditional obedience."¹⁰⁴⁷

Padre Pio's suffering

*"Suffering is pleasant."*¹⁰⁴⁸ *"My sufferings are pleasing."*¹⁰⁴⁹ *"I suffer only when I don't suffer."*¹⁰⁵⁰ *"Suffering is my daily bread, my delight."*¹⁰⁵¹ *"I suffer greatly for not being able to win all my brothers to God."*^{1052 1053}

Padre Cherubino wrote: "Padre Pio's life is one of enduring suffering."¹⁰⁵⁴

Padre Lodovico commented: "He tries to conceal his suffering with special industry and ingenuity."¹⁰⁵⁵

Dr. Pavone observed: "The wounds that Padre Pio carried never changed. They remained constant. This is not explainable in medical terms. Besides the stigmata, he had experienced the crowning with thorns and the Transverberation. He tried very hard to conceal everything."¹⁰⁵⁶

There are three white linens that are dotted with blood saved in the friary. They are associated with a written testimony by Padre Onorato. On May 6th 1965, he used the linen

¹⁰⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 1032

¹⁰⁴⁶ Modestino, 2001, p. 88

¹⁰⁴⁷ Epistolario IV, pp. 12-14

¹⁰⁴⁸ Padre Pio, 2010, p. 49

¹⁰⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 56

¹⁰⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 56

¹⁰⁵¹ Ibid., p. 43

¹⁰⁵² Ibid., p. 175

¹⁰⁵³ di Flumeri, 1994, p. 121

¹⁰⁵⁴ Castelli, 2011, p. 198

¹⁰⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 194

¹⁰⁵⁶ Schug, 1987, p. 33

to wipe Padre Pio's sweating forehead. The sweat was bloody. Padre Pio was sweating blood.¹⁰⁵⁷

Padre Joseph Pius, Bill Martin before becoming a Capuchin friar, responded to an article by Barbara Hildebrand in the Journal of the American Medical Association that suggested Padre Pio's stigmata were simply the result of hysteria: "I saw him in the last three years of his life. It was the worst period of his life. The suffering was nothing less than horrible. He was always calm, not only with open bleeding wounds, but also with the scourging, the carrying of the cross, and the crowning with thorns, the entire Passion. So if at any time he would have been emotional or hysterical, it would have been during this time. It never occurred."¹⁰⁵⁸

Asked by Mons. Rossi if he undertook penitential practices, Padre Pio said: "I don't do penitential practices. I take the ones the Lord sends. I have been forbidden penitential practices on account of my poor health."¹⁰⁵⁹

Padre Eusebio Notte tells us that Padre Pio made a fourth vow in which he committed himself never to refuse anything God asked of him.¹⁰⁶⁰

Padre Pio never revealed the real reason why he had to live in Pietrelcina, outside of a convent.¹⁰⁶¹

When Padre Pio was prohibited to say Mass in public, on June 11th 1931 he said: "Let God's will be done."¹⁰⁶² "All will be revealed for the glory of God."¹⁰⁶³

Perfect Priest, model of priests

Padre Gianluigi Pasquale: "Padre Pio spent his life in the two specific expressions of the priestly ministry: the Eucharistic celebration, and the sacramental confession."

McGregor: "In Padre Pio's priesthood we find characteristics of permanent value in an age undergoing transformation."¹⁰⁶⁴

Padre Vincenzo Frezza: "If Padre Pio had not been a priest he could not have fulfilled his mission to co-redeem. God did not only want a new victim, but he wanted this victim to be a priest."¹⁰⁶⁵ "It is the state of priest-victim that makes Padre Pio unique in the Church up to now."¹⁰⁶⁶

¹⁰⁵⁷ Modestino, 2001, p. 76

¹⁰⁵⁸ Schug, 1987, p. 64

¹⁰⁵⁹ Castelli, 2011, p. 213

¹⁰⁶⁰ Ingoldsby, 1978. p. 66

¹⁰⁶¹ Modestino, 2001. p. 55

¹⁰⁶² lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 351

¹⁰⁶³ Ibid., p. 351

¹⁰⁶⁴ Gregor, 1974. P. 62

¹⁰⁶⁵ Frezza, 1978, pp. 352-3

¹⁰⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 353-4

Maria Winowska: "Above all things, Padre Pio was a priest, and the grace lavished on him was essentially priestly."¹⁰⁶⁷

Padre Gerardo Di Flumeri: "Had Padre Pio not been a priest, he would never have become a victim."¹⁰⁶⁸

Padre Marcellino: "By his example Padre Pio invited every priest to put in the highest place Eucharist, Confession, and obedience to the Church."¹⁰⁶⁹

Cardinal Corrado Ursi: "Padre Pio was 'a complete sacrifice', the humble and great Cyrenean of Christ . . . He lived crucified, just like Christ . . . Whoever wishes to find him can do so along the way of the cross."¹⁰⁷⁰

Padre Pio to the newly ordained Padre Tarcisio da Cervinara: "My dear son, you are the victim. A wish that reveals, understandably with strong words, how difficult is the reality that awaits a new priest in implementing his own apostolate."¹⁰⁷¹

To the newly ordained Padre Alberto d'Apolito: "Love and give yourself to souls. God demands everybody's heart, but especially the heart of his ministers."¹⁰⁷²

To the newly ordained don Domenico Labellarte: "My son, the priesthood is so terrible, and the mission is so sublime that had I known it before, I would have run away to Thebaid and become hermit."¹⁰⁷³

Mario Sanvico asked: "What mission have you come for?" Padre Pio: "I have come for the priests."¹⁰⁷⁴

John Paul II: "May his example encourage priests to carry out their ministry with joy and diligence."¹⁰⁷⁵

Padre Alberto D'Apolito asked Padre Pio: "If you were reborn, would you become a Capuchin and a priest again?" Padre Pio: "Yes, I would become a Capuchin again, but not a priest. How unworthy I am to represent Jesus! How unworthy I am to be Christ on the altar! Every morning I suffer and tremble intensely at the thought that I must sacrifice and crucify Jesus, to offer Him victim to Our Heavenly Father! If, as a student, I had the knowledge that I have now, I would not have been ordained a priest. My only comfort is that of being associated with Jesus in the Divine Sacrifice and in the redemption of souls."¹⁰⁷⁶

¹⁰⁶⁷ Winowska, 1988, p. 23

¹⁰⁶⁸ di Flumeri, 1983, p. 27

¹⁰⁶⁹ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 18

¹⁰⁷⁰ da Ripabottoni, 2010, p. 357

¹⁰⁷¹ Peroni, 2002, p. 103

¹⁰⁷² Ibid., p. 103

¹⁰⁷³ Ibid., p. 103

¹⁰⁷⁴ lasenzaniro, 2006, p. 17

¹⁰⁷⁵ Viewed at: http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/2002/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_20020616_padre-pio.html

¹⁰⁷⁶ Alberto, 2007, p. 250

Brother Francis Mary F. I.: “the number of souls he purchased through his life of suffering, endured out of love of God and united to Christ’s suffering, will be a surprise to all when revealed on the day of the judgment!”¹⁰⁷⁷

¹⁰⁷⁷ Franciscan Friars, 2009, p. 89

26 Padre Pio and Francis of Assisi side by side

Padre Pio loved and admired St. Francis to the point that he decided to spend his life in the Franciscan Capuchin Order.

Padre Pio often saw St. Francis while in ecstasy.

1. St. Francis was born in Assisi on September 26th 1181 to Pietro di Bernardone, a prominent businessman, and to Pica Bourlemont, originally from France.

After his birth, he was baptized Giovanni in honor of St. John the Baptist while his father was in France on business. When Pietro returned, he decided to call him Francesco instead.

Padre Pio was born in Pietrelcina on May 25, 1887, to Orazio Forgione and Maria Giuseppa De Nunzio. They farmed their own land. Padre Pio was baptized Francesco on the day after his birth.

2. Francesco was self-taught, reading many books and learning several languages. He enjoyed the company of many friends.

Padre Pio went to Mass and recited the rosary daily with his family from his early childhood. He received an informal schooling through private teachers at elementary and junior high levels.

3. In 1201, at the age 20 years, Francis was a soldier in a military expedition against Perugia. He was taken prisoner at Collestrada and spent a year in captivity.

In 1204 Francis left for Puglia to enlist in the army of Gualtiero di Brienne. While on his way however, he had a celestial vision in Spoleto, and decided to return to Assisi.

In the fall of 1205 in the Church of San Damiano, the icon of Christ Crucified came alive and said to him three times: "Francis, Francis, go and repair My house which, as you can see, is falling into ruins."

In January 1206, age the age of 25, his father became very angry with him because of his religiosity. After a final interview in the presence of the bishop Guido II, Francis renounced his father and his patrimony, even laying aside the garments he was wearing, and started living as a beggar and as a preacher.

Padre Pio spent the years to age 23 preparing for priesthood in the Capuchin order. The five years after his ordination were spent mainly in Pietrelcina, with a short interlude as a recruit in the Italian army. In Pietrelcina, he prayed and meditated and received the invisible stigmata.

4. In 1209, at the age of 28, Francis and his followers went to Rome, receiving approval from Pope Innocent III to found a new religious order. He called the new community *Frati Minori* (lesser friars), and they lived in a deserted lazaret house in Rivo Torto, near Assisi.

Two years later, on Palm Sunday, 28th March 1211, Francis received Clare at the Porziuncola and established the Order of Poor Dames, later called the Poor Clares.

When Padre Pio moved to the convent of San Giovanni Rotondo in 1918, at the age of 31, he encouraged his spiritual children to join the third order of Saint Francis.

He exchanged numerous letters of spiritual direction, promoted the formation of prayer groups, started first the Saint Francis Hospital, and later the *Casa Sollievo Della Sofferenza*, the House for the Relief of Suffering.

5. By 1217, the followers of St. Francis had grown to a congregation of 5000 friars. It was divided according to provinces, and groups were sent out to France, Germany, Hungary, Spain and the East.

In 1219, Francis went to Egypt. Crossing the lines between the Sultan and the Crusaders in Damietta, he was received by the Sultan Melek-el-Kamel. He visited the holy places in Palestine in 1220.

Padre Pio did not found a new order, and never went on a mission.

6. La Verna, a gift to Francis from the Count Orlando di Chiusi, was his favorite place for prayer and contemplation. While he was praying at La Verna on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, 14th September 1224, he received the stigmata.

Brother Leo reported: "Suddenly he saw a vision of a seraph, a six-winged angel on a cross. This angel gave him the gift of the five wounds of Christ."

The wounds remained on his body until his death 2 years later.

Padre Pio received the invisible wounds in 1910 at the age of 23 in Pietrelcina, and received the visible wounds from the Crucifix in the choir of the church in 1918. He suffered the pain of the stigmata until his death 58 years later.

7. Suffering from several ailments, Francis was brought to the Porziuncola where he spent the last days of his life.

He died at the age of 45 on the evening of 3rd October 1226 singing Psalm 141.

He was buried at the Church of San Giorgio in Assisi.

Padre Pio remained in the same convent for 52 years. He died whispering "*Gesu, Maria.*"

8. Francis preached to the birds, talked to the wolf in Gubbio, created the nativity scene in Greccio.

He was a poet who celebrated creation. In the *Cantico Delle Creature*, he identified intimately with God's creation in using such terms as: brother sun, brother wind, brother fire, sister moon, sister water, sister death, mother earth, madonna poverty.

His prodigies are reported in the *Fioretti*, the "Little Flowers of St. Francis", and in the writings of Tommaso da Celano, one of his first disciples.

Padre Pio spent many hours a day in the confessional, celebrated a majestic mystical Mass daily, recited innumerable rosaries, healed souls and bodies both directly and in bilocation, and built a magnificent hospital for the suffering.

He had special gifts that are unique in the Catholic literature, both in terms of number and variety.

He had the permanent and tangible companionship of his Guardian Angel since the days of his infancy.

Padre Pio had unparalleled detailed access to the worlds of the afterlife, and gave us spectacular glimpses of their nature.

9. On 16th July 1228, less than two years after his death, Francis of Assisi was pronounced a saint by Pope Gregory IX. His feast day is observed on 4th October.

On June 16th 2002, 35 years after his death, Padre Pio was proclaimed a saint by Pope John Paul II. His feast day is observed on 23rd September.

10. The day after his canonization, on July 17th 1228, Pope Gregory IX laid the foundation stone for the Church of St. Francis.

The Basilica of Saint Francis in Assisi, built on several levels, was consecrated by Pope Innocent IV in 1253, 25 years after its construction was commenced.

The church of Padre Pio was started in 1994, and inaugurated on July 1st 2004.

On April 24th 2008, after 42 years in the crypt of the Sanctuary of Santa Maria delle Grazie, the body of Padre Pio was relocated to the crypt of the new church dedicated to him.

In 1959 Padre Pio was shown the newly built church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, just before its inauguration on July 1st. The church was several times larger than the original church, but to everybody's surprise Padre Pio was not impressed and called it "a mousetrap", saying *Ma che avete fatto. Nu mastrillo? Doveva essere piu' grande, molto piu' grande.* (What have you made? A mousetrap? It should have been bigger, much bigger.)

Padre Pio's wish has been fulfilled since his death with the construction of the Church of San Pio, that he certainly loves.

It is a spectacular, new and modern rendition of an immense *grazie*, a "thank you" to God from all the faithful for His generosity in giving us Padre Pio, the man who attained fusion with Christ.

27 Padre Pio and the Apostle Paul

Padre Pio was very close to the Apostle Paul:

"I am giving you an example and model of the true Christian in my beloved Apostle St. Paul."

"I cannot read St. Paul's letters without experiencing a fragrance that reaches the very apex of my spirit."

There are a number of quotes from St. Paul that apply equally to himself to and to Padre Pio:

Gal 2:19 "I have been crucified with Christ"

Gal. 2:20 "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."

Col.1:24 "I rejoice in my suffering for your sake."

Col.1:24 "In my own body I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of the Church."

Gal. 6:17 "I bear the marks of Jesus on my body."

Acts 14:11-12 "So extraordinary were the mighty deeds God accomplished at the hands of Paul that when face cloths or aprons that had touched his skin were applied to the sick, their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them."

It is well known that people unable to approach Padre Pio in person were often granted a cure by contact with some objects that had been touched by him.

28 Padre Pio and St. John of the Cross

The path to the perfect union with God, through *the dark night*.

St. John of the Cross (1542-1591) lived in Spain and died at the age of 49. In 1568, at the age of 26, he joined St. Teresa of Avila in the foundation of the Discalced Carmelites. St. John and St. Teresa are the most brilliant, articulate, energetic and successful figures that the Counter-Reformation has produced.

On December 3rd 1577, St. John of the Cross was imprisoned in complete isolation for more than nine months in a cold, dark and narrow cell only six feet by ten feet dark in size within the monastery of Toledo. The severe regime included a public lashing three times a week before the community of monks. He escaped in a miraculous manner in August 1578. While in prison, he wrote some of his most exquisite poetry.

St. John of the Cross was austere to the extreme, but also full of joy and kindness. He was declared a saint in 1726, and Doctor of the Church in 1926.

In his great poem *The Dark Night of the Soul*, the experience of abandonment which God reserves with sublime generosity for those who have followed him on their way to attaining perfect union with the Creator is described in extraordinary detail.

In the mystical journey the union is reached in three stages.

- 1.The way of the beginner (Purgative way).
- 2.The way of proficient (Illuminative way): The dark night of the senses.
- 3.The way of the perfect (Unitive way): The dark night of the spirit.

In a letter to his spiritual director on December 12th 1923, Padre Pio wrote: " In vain I turn to God. Everywhere there is silence, even in Heaven, which has become as bronze to me . . . I live in a perpetual night."

In the end, only the veil of the flesh separates the soul from the Beatific Vision.

Padre Pio completed all the stages and attained fusion with God. He described the experience as being: "like two candles that melt together and are no longer distinguishable."

29 Who is Padre Pio?

Padre Pio is a masterpiece of God's love for us.

With Padre Pio the extraordinary became ordinary, the uncommon became common, the supernatural became natural, the unthinkable became routine, and the unpredictable became the norm.

A more complete, lasting, unwavering selflessness cannot be imagined in a human being.

From birth to death, every day of his life was consumed by the love and imitation of God through Jesus; consumed by the love and help for the suffering humanity of his brothers and sisters on earth; consumed by the love and suffrage of the souls in Purgatory to shorten and mitigate their pain; and consumed by the love and obedience at any price to the Roman Catholic Church.

God lavished his gifts on him with an abundance that has no equal.

And Padre Pio made good use of them with healings, resurrections, levitations, prophecy, the reading the hearts, speaking in tongues, reading unknown languages, emanating the fragrance of flowers, multiplying food in times of need, permanently enjoying the presence of his Guardian Angel, frequent visitations with heavenly Beings, seeing the souls of Purgatory, knowing in detail the status of the deceased, preventing bodily harm to others through bilocation, preventing car accidents through bilocation, preventing destruction of things through bilocation, healing through bilocation, and assisting dying people in making a peaceful transition through bilocation.

These things happened while he ingested minimal food, took minimal sleep, had constant headaches, endured a lifelong chronic bronchitis frequently diagnosed as pulmonary tuberculosis, and experiencing bouts of extremely high fever and profuse nightly sweating.

Padre Pio's distinguishing characteristics were kindness, joy, serenity, humility, modesty, piety, attitude of forgiveness, perfect obedience to all ecclesiastical authorities,

He relived the Passion of Christ through thousands of Masses.

By raising his right wounded hand, he absolved millions of sins.

He walked millions of painful steps on his wounded feet.

His fingers thumbed through millions of rosaries. His lips uttered hundreds of millions of *Ave Marias*.

His body suffered billions of seconds of continuous pain from the wounds.

Each and every one of his billions of heartbeats was a sublime symphony for the Glory of God.

Padre Pio is now in Heaven immersed in the joy of the beatific vision.

In Paradise he continues to work for us, pray for us, intercede for us, distributing all kinds of graces for the asking.

The only thing he doesn't do anymore is suffer.

Thank you God for having given us Padre Pio.

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